

Iran 'not interested' in nuclear arms

ABU DHABI (R) — Iran's defence minister said Tuesday it was not interested in acquiring nuclear weapons or buying new conventional arms. Khatam Abadi told Reuters an \$850 million defence allocation in Iran's new budget would be spent on maintaining its military, but not through new arms purchases. "We are producing some facilities that we need in our defence industries. We do not need any new weapons," he said. Mr. Abadi said Iran's nuclear programme was limited to power generating. Western powers had expressed anxiety when Iran said in September it had agreed to buy a small nuclear reactor from China. "We bought the nuclear power station (from) China. This is the only activity we are following in the field of nuclear. But in the army, in our armaments and weapons it is not our policy to follow nuclear weapons," he said. Iran has repeatedly denied Western reports that it was making progress on a nuclear arms programme. A draft U.S. intelligence report said in November last year that Iran could develop a nuclear weapon by the year 2000. Some Arab and Western countries have voiced concern about Iran's recent arms purchases, including submarines from Russia. It has ordered three and at year took delivery of one which it deployed in the Gulf waters.

Amnesty opens Jordan Chapter

AMMAN (AP) — Amnesty International, the London-based human rights organisation, inaugurated a Jordan chapter Tuesday, four months after obtaining mission from the government. The opening of Amnesty International's Amman chapter came days after King Hussein launched a study centre on human rights abuse, freedom and democracy. "We hope that the Jordanian chapter will be the starting point of a better human-rights record in the Middle East," said Abdul Qader, a membership coordinator. The Amman chapter, consisting of about 400 members, will be the third in the Arab World after branches in Tunisia and Algeria. The office will "work towards defending human rights in the Arab World and consolidating democratic reforms in Jordan," said Asman Khader, a human rights activist.

Journalist attacked southern Egypt

SIUT (AP) — Gunmen shot a journalist carrying Egyptian tourists Tuesday but missed his target, police said. A 30-year-old, apparently the work of Muslim extremists, occurred in Matruh, 30 kilometres north of Assiut. That city is a hotbed of Muslim extremist violence. Police said the bus was hit by a rocket fired from the militants. It was the fifth attack on tourists in Egypt this year, minor, with no injuries. A 30-year-old, apparently the work of Muslim extremists, occurred in Matruh, 30 kilometres north of Assiut. That city is a hotbed of Muslim extremist violence. Police said the bus was hit by a rocket fired from the militants. It was the fifth attack on tourists in Egypt this year, minor, with no injuries.

Bosnians drive in Israel

AVIV (AP) — Israeli officials welcomed 84 Muslim refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina Tuesday and promised them shelter as long as the civil war raged. The officials, headed by Environment Minister Yossi Sarid, forced to change housing arrangements for the visitors after Israeli Arab mayors withdrew earlier offer to take them in. Israeli Arabs said they feared Jewish state's move to bring the refugees was a publicity ploy to draw attention away from the expulsion of more than 400 Muslim fundamentalists in mid-October. They also complained taking the refugees might be a support for "ethnic cleansing" since the Bosnian Muslims had fled from Serbs to the Croatian capital of reb. The Arabs have called supporting the Muslims in Bosnia.

Yeltsin calls for emergency congress

SCOW (R) — President is Yeltsin called Tuesday for emergency session of Russia's new legislature, the Congress People's Deputies, to end a "struggle" crippling the country. A statement from Mr. Yeltsin's press office said the congress could take place in the 10 days of March and would be convened on ratifying a constitutional agreement. The call for congress session was issued at talks between Mr. Yeltsin and his conservative rival Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of the new Soviet parliament (see related story on p. 8).

Die in Kurdish clashes in Turkey

ANKARA (R) — Thirteen Kurdish Kurds and three Turkish soldiers have been killed in clashes in southeastern Turkey in the last three days, officials said. Eight rebels, including a guerrilla of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), and three soldiers were killed Tuesday near town of Mardin province, one of the regional emergency government in Diyarbakir. On Sunday, five PKK fighters were killed in a gunbat in a town near Sumer village in the same province, they said. The forces, fighting the PKK insurgency in the southeast since 1984, have persisted in a crack-down on the PKK despite harsh conditions.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية. الرأى

Aide denies Montazeri arrested

TEHRAN (R) — A spokesman for Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, once the designated successor to Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, Tuesday denied reports of his arrest but said five of his aides including his grandson had been detained. Demonstrators marched against Ayatollah Montazeri in the holy city of Qom last week after he accused Iran's rulers of usurping the Islamic revolution's leadership. "Ayatollah Montazeri has not been arrested. I deny that," said a spokesman, contacted by telephone at Ayatollah Montazeri's home in Qom. "There were no clashes, but five persons including the Ayatollah's grandson have been held since Saturday." Former Iranian President Abolhasan Bani-Sadr said in a statement in Paris that Ayatollah Montazeri was arrested Saturday. Mr. Bani-Sadr said armed men attacked Ayatollah Montazeri's home and killed three people Friday after he denounced supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in a speech last week. The spokesman said a group of demonstrators disrupted Ayatollah Montazeri's theology class at Hosseiniyeh Shohada, a religious hall next to his home, on Saturday. Police then sealed the hall and seized cars and furniture. Ayatollah Montazeri, 71, cancelled his classes for the next week and would not resume teaching until after usual holidays for the holy months of Ramadan which ends in late March, he said.

Christopher does not expect go-ahead for peace talks during trip

- Palestinians will say no — Abed Rabbo
- Rabin 'unable to keep 9-month pledge'

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Secretary of State Warren M. Christopher, about to start his first overseas trip, said Tuesday he did not expect Middle East peace talks to get a go-ahead on stalled peace talks. Even with U.N. endorsement of his compromise with Israel over expulsions of Palestinians, Mr. Christopher voiced limited expectations as he met here with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.

He said he hoped to get "some sense" from the leaders he met over a week's time on how they felt about the peace talks suspended here in mid-December.

Mr. Christopher will visit Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Israel and possibly Lebanon during his week in the region. The Arab-Israeli peace talks had been suspended since last December when Israel expelled 415 Palestinians from the occupied territories. "I'm not as familiar as I'd like to be with the region or its principal personalities. So I don't want to establish a particular target for the trip," Mr. Christopher said.

"I think I'll be quite satisfied if I have an opportunity to listen to what they have to say, to what is on their minds and try to get some sense... as to where the negotiations stand," he said.

"I hope that subsequently the peace process can be restarted with a rescheduling of the bilateral and multilateral negotiations, but I would not expect that to happen during the course of my trip," said Mr. Christopher. Mr. Christopher flies to the Middle East Wednesday night. He will then meet in Geneva Feb. 25 with Russian Foreign Minister Andrei V. Kozirev and go on to Brussels the next day for talks with North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) foreign ministers about the war in Bosnia. The meeting with Mr. Kozirev

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Expellees call for American pressure on Israel

MARJ AL ZOHOOR, Lebanon (R) — Palestinian expellees Tuesday urged U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher to put pressure on Israel before pushing Arab states to resume peace talks. The 396 exiles, stuck in South Lebanon, start a third month in exile Wednesday, a day before Mr. Christopher arrives in Egypt at the start of a week-long Middle East tour. Abdul Aziz Al Rantisi, the leader of the group, said they were sure Arab states would back the Palestinians in their demand for Israel to be forced to allow all of them to return immediately in line with U.N. Security Council Resolution 799.

"The big challenge for Israel does not come from the (expellees), it comes from the entire Arab Nation," Dr. Rantisi said. "The Palestinian people's suffering from Israel's killing, jailing and sabotaging our economy and terrorising is a matter for the Arab (states) which must decide what to tell Christopher."

"We call on Arab countries to take all measures to stop Israel continuing its terrorism against the Palestinian people," Dr. Rantisi said before Mr. Christopher raised the question of Arab negotiators returning to talks with Israel he should realise the Jewish state refused to promise to stop expelling Palestinians of killing them in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. "We want Christopher to respond to these questions, before talking about peace talks," he said.

He added that out of all the Arab states exiles pinned most hopes on Egypt to convince Mr. Christopher to put pressure on Israel to implement Resolution 799 and take them all back. "Egypt is the big power in the Arab World and we value its honourable position and put our hopes in it," Dr. Rantisi said.

King calls for fostering democracy and consultation as elements of life

His Majesty visits Yarmouk University, underlines commitment to education

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday stressed that democracy and consultation were important ingredients of Jordan's life and called for fostering them in order to turn the Kingdom into a model for the region. Speaking at a meeting with Yarmouk University teaching staff and student representatives, King Hussein reaffirmed the need for respect for counter opinions, an element that "has never been

a part of life in this entire region despite the fact that it is essential for pursuing the march of freedom and achieving the goals of the Arab Nation." King Hussein said Arabs should "appreciate the value of their existence since it is one of the rights which enable them to participate in addressing challenges."

The King emphasised the importance of education, research and concerted action to overcome obstacles and challenges and

voiced hope that all citizens continue to shoulder their responsibilities at this difficult junction in time. He reiterated that Jordanian citizens, irrespective of their origins or birthplaces, are one family. "It is our duty to extend support to our kinsmen and brethren who opted to face challenges and opposition," he said. King Hussein said that a

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Fresh trouble could brew over inspection flights over Baghdad

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — U.N. arms inspectors flew several helicopter missions over Iraq last week without complaint from the authorities but they steered clear of the capital, U.N. sources said Tuesday.

Baghdad has previously objected to U.N. helicopter flights and the New York Times reported Tuesday that the U.N. teams were setting the stage for confrontation with Iraq by challenging the ban on flying over Baghdad.

The inspectors, who are charged with destroying Iraq's weapons of mass destruction under Gulf war ceasefire terms, intended to photograph an undisclosed site in Baghdad from the air, the newspaper said.

A U.N. source in Baghdad told Reuters: "We made many flights last week. There has been no objection from the Iraqis."

However, they avoided flying over the city in line with an earlier understanding with Iraqi authorities, he said, adding that he had no idea about the New York Times report.

Patrice Palanque, leading a 13-member team of ballistic missile experts here, said he was not aware of any United Nations decision going back on that understanding.

The New York Times, in a report from U.N. headquarters in New York, said the inspectors' U.N. special commission would tell Iraq this week of its intention to send a helicopter over the Iraqi capital to photograph an undisclosed site.

The issue is sensitive and may heighten chances for another confrontation with Iraq if the U.N. requests and insists on flying helicopters over this city of four million people.

Mr. Palanque, a Frenchman, said he was free to use helicopters on his mission. But asked if he could fly over Baghdad, Mr. Palanque replied: "No, I guess there is a kind of understanding with the Iraqis of certain limits. I can't tell you any more things."

A U.N. official said in New York that the weapons inspectors in Iraq want to survey two secret sites in Baghdad where they believe the Iraqi government designed missiles to carry nuclear warheads.

Tim Trevan, the spokesman for the U.N. special commission that is dismantling Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, said Tuesday that "we have the right to fly over Baghdad; we will exercise that right when we have operational need to do so."

FIS appeals rejected; 700 held in arms crackdown

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria's supreme court Tuesday rejected appeals against 12-year prison sentences passed on two leaders of the outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS).

Supporters of Abassi Madani and Ali Belbaid are blamed for more than a year of violence in which authorities say over 600 people have been killed in deliberate attacks.

Six judges delivered their verdict just hours after the paramilitary gendarmerie said it had arrested nearly 700 people trafficking arms to FIS militants. Mr. Madani, now 62, and his fiery deputy Belbaid, 36, were sentenced last July by a military court in Bledja, 50 kilometres south of Algiers.

They were charged with attacking state security forces and undermining the economy after clashes in June 1991 between security forces and FIS militants demanding an Islamic state.

Five other FIS officials received lesser terms which were also upheld by the supreme court

Tuesday. Their original trial was held two weeks after Head of State Mohammed Boudiaf was assassinated and their imprisonment fuelled anger among fundamentalists. But diplomats saw the sentences as light and a gesture towards Islamic moderates. The defence, which termed the trial "political," and the prosecution, which sought life terms, had both appealed. Announcing that it had cracked the "biggest arms trafficking network since independence," the gendarmerie said it had seized a total of 842 weapons made up of 400 automatic pistols, five sub-machineguns and 437 shotguns. The gang operated in 11 regions including the capital and was a "terrorist organisation," the gendarmerie said. FIS militants are termed "terrorists" in Algeria. The gendarmerie said half of the nearly 700 held were FIS militants or sympathisers. The

Hekmatyar: Truce is temporary

CHARASYAB, Afghanistan (R) — Dissident Afghan guerrilla chief Gulbuddin Hekmatyar said Tuesday he was ready to hand over the artillery he has used to bombard Kabul for months, but only to a government acceptable to all parties.

Mr. Hekmatyar was speaking as the rumble of artillery and rocket exchanges shook the south of the capital, violating Sunday's ceasefire which halted a four-week bombardment that killed about 1,000 civilians and injured more than 5,000.

"We don't want fighting," the leader of the Hezb-e-Islami party said in an interview at his headquarters 20 kilometres south of Kabul.

Mr. Hekmatyar said he had agreed to silence his artillery only at the request of a Pakistani

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Palestinian leadership looking for compromise to resume talks

By Sana Atiyeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Palestinian leadership has been thrown off track with the U.N. Security Council's failure to take measures against Israel to ensure the immediate return of Palestinian evictees stranded in South Lebanon. The issue has fuelled further debate on whether the Palestinians should attend the next round of peace talks.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) is now looking for a face-saving formula along the lines of the U.S.-brokered Israeli offer to immediately return 101 of the expellees but with better conditions before deciding to attend the next round of peace

negotiations, Palestinian sources said.

According to the sources, the PLO leadership is seeking a compromise on the evictee crisis to enable the Palestinian delegation to return to the negotiating table without losing credibility among the Palestinian constituency.

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat dispatched delegation spokesperson Hanan Ashrawi to Washington last week in an effort to modify the Israeli offer ahead of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's tour of the region.

PLO delegates criticised Mr. Arafat's apparent snubbing of the rest of the team that normally negotiates with the State Department. They say that Mr. Arafat wanted to avoid a

potential confrontation with Washington.

Chief negotiator Haidar Abdul Shafi, who the sources said was in the U.S. at the time of the meeting, has threatened to withdraw from the delegation and refuses to return to the negotiating table until all the evictees return home.

Dr. Ashrawi's meetings with State Department officials were described as unsuccessful. She apparently told the Americans it would be difficult to resume the peace talks under the present conditions and demanded U.S. pressure on Israel to improve its offer.

PLO Executive Committee member Yasser Abed Rabbo told the Jordan Times that no progress was achieved in Washington and reiterated that

the Palestinians would not return to the negotiations until Resolution 799 is implemented; a reaffirmation of the official Palestinian position.

"There is no change in our policy regarding this issue," Mr. Abed Rabbo said in Amman.

He also challenged Washington to deal with the Palestinian issue with an even-handed approach. "(The expulsion issue) is a test of the seriousness of the U.S. in dealing with Security Council resolutions," Mr. Abed Rabbo stressed.

Dr. Ashrawi told Cable News Network (CNN) Monday that the Palestinians would not compromise on the implementation of Resolution 799 calling for Israel's immediate

and unconditional return of all the evictees whom the Jewish state described as Islamic militants.

But Dr. Ashrawi was also quoted in Washington recently as saying that the Palestinians were "willing to look at the implementation of 799 to ensure compliance through a timetable or deadline... within a reasonable timeframe." PLO officials in Cairo also recently spoke about a "two-phase solution," something the evictees themselves have repeatedly rejected.

Other statements, described by Palestinian analysts as "test balloons" indicating that the PLO leadership is looking for a compromise, came from Mr. Arafat's advisor Bassam Abu Sbari on Monday. He told a

Tunisian newspaper that the expulsion crisis should not be linked to the continuation of the peace talks, and that it was only a "side issue."

Local and Arab pressure on the PLO has escalated following Friday's Security Council statement on the expulsion crisis. Locally, the PLO has to avoid creating a division within the Palestinian delegation, a threat that is now looming over its head for the first time, according to delegation members.

The members, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told the Jordan Times that the expulsion had already created a rift within the delegation, endangering the makeup of the negotiating and advisory team formulated for the Madrid con-

ference in October, 1992. Dr. Abdul Shafi's position has gained support from the majority of his team as well as from some of the mainstream PLO groups and individuals.

With lack of progress in the peace talks with Israel and with the Jewish state's escalation of its violations of human rights in the occupied territories, analysts said the PLO was also faced with losing ground to the 10 Damascus-based opposition groups including Hamas — all of whom oppose the U.S.-sponsored peace talks.

But observers said that Mr. Arafat had "scored extra points" against the opposition factions and asserted his leadership when he received a surprising Iraqi blessing for

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Expellees become political symbol for Palestinians in occupied territories

By Said Ghazali
The Associated Press

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM

A calendar for the fasting month of Ramadan shows Palestinian exiles praying near a tent painted with the tenet "There is no God but God."

Nazeh Minawi, who printed the timetable for the Ramadan dawn-to-dusk fast to advertise his dress factory, explains why he chose the beleaguered exiles to replace a dove of peace symbol in last year's version.

"Nobody is talking about peace, but every Palestinian is talking about the exiles," Mr. Minawi said. The 400 men exiled by Israel in mid-December are heroes already to many Palestinians and are becoming a potent symbol in a struggle for public opinion that could affect American-backed Middle East peace talks.

Palestinians' sympathy with the exiles in their snowy tent camp is being augmented by video cassettes, audio tapes and graffiti. The outpouring also is boosting the popularity of the hardline Muslim movement Hamas, to which the exiles are alleged to belong and which opposes the peace talks.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher Wednesday starts a week-long visit to the Middle East to restart the negotiations by the end of Ramadan in late March. Palestinian negotiators, however, insist they cannot return to the talks against popular will.

Ghassan Khatib, one of the Palestinian delegates, said he is often approached on the street by people who object to renewing the talks until the exiles are all returned as demanded by the U.N. Security Council.

"It ends with everybody

saying 'I think it's hopeless. Israel does not want peace. Look at the exiles,' Mr. Khatib said.

Mr. Minawi, the dress manufacturer in the West Bank town of Ramallah, said sympathy for the exiles was natural among the Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"We are sitting in heated houses, and they are living in the open, in bad weather. They are sons of Palestine, regardless of their politics," he said.

But materials distributed in the occupied territories have a political and religious tinge. Popular video cassettes depict the exiles at their camp in Marj Al Zuhour in South Lebanon as unsubmitive warriors of Islam.

"We greet you with the salute of great Islam. Here is the song of battles to our heroic Mujahedeen in Marj Al Zuhour," a booming voice says in introducing the videotape.

The videotapes are commercial ventures, like Mr. Minawi's calendar, which has been imitated by other businesses and distributed by the thousands in mosques.

But audio tapes proliferating in the occupied territories are prepared by Hamas. They praise both the exiles and attacks on Israelis by the movement's underground Izzidine Al Qassem brigade, named for a Muslim leader killed by the British in the 1930s.

Leaflets and graffiti — staples of the five-year Palestinian uprising — also are being used by Hamas to spread its message. "Kidnapping and killing and shooting are Hamas," said one slogan on a wall in Jerusalem's Shufat refugee camp.

The expulsions, which followed the killing of five Israeli soldiers and the kidnapping and slaying of a sixth, came as Palestinians

were frustrated with the lack of progress in the peace talks. Danny Rubinstein, an Arab affairs reporter for the Hebrew daily Haaretz, sees the expulsions as a boost to Hamas at the expense of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), which backs the negotiations.

"The extreme Israeli response has moved many in the Palestinian national movement to think there is another option besides the frustrating political negotiations in Washington," Mr. Rubinstein wrote.

Benny Temkin, a member of the liberal Meretz bloc in Israel's parliament, says the expulsions put the Palestinians at a turning point that Israel must respond to if it wants to save the peace process.

"The government of Israel must encourage the Palestinian moderates, offer concessions," Mr. Temkin said in the interview.

However, the Palestinian popular mood seems to have changed already. Israel Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, whose election last July brought hope for peace, is now damned for the mass expulsions. Conversations that used to be about the peace talks now centre on the exiles and when they will come home.

The mood is being reflected, too, in tougher talk from some Palestinian moderates.

"Rabin is behaving like a general at the front, and we have to change the rules of the game," Faisal Hussein, chief adviser to the Palestinian negotiators, was quoted as saying by the Arabic daily Al Quds Al Arabi.

"The PLO will lead the direct negotiations besides its battle on the ground as happened in Vietnam and Algeria," Mr. Hussein told the London-based newspaper.



ON THE WARPATH: Israeli right-wingers holding torches with policemen who block them from attacking Palestinians in Jabal Mukaber in Arab East Jerusalem, where an Israeli was stabbed to death by an unknown assailant Monday (AFP photo)

Aoun presses anti-Syria campaign

PARIS (R) — Lebanon's exiled Christian leader General Michel Aoun, saying there were signs that Washington was hardening its attitude towards Damascus, urged the U.S.-led Gulf war allies to eject Syrian forces from his country.

He told the French newspaper Le Figaro in an interview published Tuesday that President Bill Clinton had described the Syrian presence in Lebanon as an occupation and the latest elections there as fraudulent.

"An American government that says it respects the United Nations Charter and human rights must revise its policy towards Lebanon," he said.

"Those who forced Iraq out of Kuwait must force Syrians out of Lebanon," added Gen. Aoun, who was allowed into exile in France on condition that he refrain from making political statements.

Gen. Aoun said Lebanon was getting poorer and peace was remote despite apparent calm in the country.

Editor of Arab News fired for anti-Mubarak story

BAHRAIN (AP) — The editor of Saudi Arabia's leading English-language daily, the Arab News, has been fired after the paper published a news agency story that included remarks against Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

The Arab News, which is printed in Jeddah, Riyadh and Dhahran from where it reaches Bahrain the same day, appeared Tuesday with the announcement that Farouq Luqman was named editor-in-chief by the publishers, Saudi Research and Publishing Company.

He replaced Khaled Al Maena, the paper's editor-in-chief for more than 10 years, to whom the published announcement extended thanks for his tenure.

During the past decade, the Arab News grew rapidly to become the most widely-read of three English-language newspapers in the kingdom.

No reason was given for the change but it followed the absence of the paper from the stands Sunday, and its resumed publication Monday with a front-page apology "to President Hosni Mubarak, the government and the Egyptian people for the error in publishing the news item on Jan. 22, 1993."

It added: "The error was inadvertent and is deeply regretted."

A management official would only cite "technical problems" as the reason for the one-day absence from the stands, declining further detail even as news spread Monday in the kingdom's and Gulf press circles that Mr. Maena had been removed.

Mr. Maena was in London on his way back from delivering a lecture on the Islamic World's views on the Bosnia-Herzegovina crisis at Georgetown University in the United States.

The news item in question was a report by the Associated Press on a U.S. immigration hearing for an Egyptian fundamentalist leader, Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman.

The Egyptian sheikh was quoted as saying: "The Egyptian people will not accept being whipped and raped and robbed by the corrupt Mubarak regime."

Arab diplomats, who could not be named under their embassy rules, said the quote angered the Egyptian president and Cairo took up the issue with the Saudi authorities.

Saudi Research and Marketing Company, is owned by the family of Prince Salman, the governor of Riyadh. The group's chairman is Prince Ahmad, son of Prince Salman and nephew of King Fahd.

Mr. Luqman was the managing-editor of the paper until late last year when he was named as editor-in-chief of an economic daily published by the same house, a post from which he was recalled to head the Arab News.

Mr. Luqman holds a master's degree in journalism from the school of journalism, Columbia University.

2 Kuwaiti MPs retain their seats in rerun

KUWAIT (AP) — Two pro-government politicians have retained their seats in parliament after being forced into a rerun vote by allegations of election fraud, according to results released Tuesday.

The election dashed hopes of the opposition to increase the majority its holds in the 50 member assembly. It won 35 seats in the October general elections.

Monday's voting was the first time a challenge had forced a new election in the emirate, where members of the royal family hold the top government posts.

In December, the constitutional court annulled the elections for the two seats in the predominantly tribal districts of Abrah Kheitan and Omariya.

Each of Kuwait's 25 districts has two seats in parliament. Those securing the seats are the top vote winner and the runner up.

The first-place finishers in

Abrah Kheitan and Omariya were not challenged. The problem arose because only 10 votes separated the second and third-place — finishers in both districts.

The third-place finishers, both of them supporters of the opposition, claimed that 14 soldiers voted in Abrah Kheitan and 10 soldiers voted in Omariya — enough to tilt the results.

Kuwait's election law bans voting by the military.

State-run Kuwait Television said Mubarak Al Khairi and Humoud Al Jabri won the elections against Mussalam Al Barak, a Labour Union leader, and Abdul Salam Al Osaime, a former police officer looking to implement Islamic law.

Mr. Khairi won 1,942 votes in Omariya district, while his opponent won 1,659. In Abrah Kheitan, Mr. Jabri took 1,067 votes to 1,030 for Mr. Osaime.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Sudan sets border talks with Egypt

CAIRO (R) — Sudan's new foreign minister said on Tuesday a delayed meeting of an Egyptian-Sudanese committee on a disputed border area would take place in Khartoum Friday. Hussein Suleiman Abu Saleh, stopping off briefly in Cairo airport on his way to a meeting of African foreign ministers in Addis Ababa, praised "eternal" ties with Egypt and said any small differences should not be allowed to overshadow them. The two neighbours have both claimed sovereignty over the Halaib triangle on their common border. Ties are also strained because Egypt accuses Sudan's Islamic rulers of backing Muslim militants fighting governments in Egypt and other Arab states. "The joint Sudanese-Egyptian committee will meet as planned on Feb. 19," Mr. Abu Saleh told reporters. "I see the Halaib issue as the issue of an artificial border drawn up by (British colonial) occupation. Egyptian-Sudanese ties are eternal, there are realities we must not forget. If there are any differences, they are small."

Yemen affirms guarantee of foreigners' safety

SANAA (R) — Yemen's First Deputy Prime Minister Hassan Mohammad Makki has reiterated his government's assurances to guarantee the safety of foreigners working in the country. Mr. Makki made the assurances during a meeting with oil industry workers in Sanaa, the Yemeni News Agency said Monday night. The agency quoted him as saying the Yemeni government would offer companies working in the country "all facilities...to serve their joint interests and implement the safety plan." It said Mr. Makki urged oil firms to double their efforts to seek oil in Yemen, which produces around 200,000 barrels per day. Oil industry sources said earlier this month they had been told Yemen could not guarantee the safety of foreigners in the country after a spate of hostage-taking. They said Texas-based Hunt Oil, which produces 85 per cent of Yemen's crude oil, has nevertheless decided to maintain normal operations after a series of discussions requested by Oil Minister Saleh Abu Bakr Hussain.

Islamic-led syndicates protest new law

CAIRO (R) — Officials of Egypt's professional syndicates protested outside parliament Monday against a new law which would make it much harder for Islamic fundamentalists to win control of syndicate councils. The proposed law, on which protesters said parliament was due to vote Tuesday, requires 50 per cent of a syndicate's members of vote if an election to its council is to be valid. Supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood, the main political opposition in Egypt, surprised and worried the government last year by winning control of the lawyers' syndicate, a bastion of the liberal establishment, in elections in which only a small proportion of members voted. Supporters of the Brotherhood, which is officially illegal, have won control of most of Egypt's syndicates in recent years, including the doctors, engineers and pharmacists. The protesters, about 70-strong, argued that many members of parliament had been elected with the votes of only a small percentage of the potential electors because there was such widespread lack of faith in the fairness of elections in Egypt.

Sudan frees priest to mark pope's visit

KHARTOUM (R) — A Roman Catholic priest jailed since July was freed on the orders of Sudanese leader Omar Hassan Al Bashir to mark Pope John Paul's 10-hour visit to Khartoum last week, a Khartoum newspaper reported Tuesday. Father David Tombe, a southern Sudanese, was released from a Khartoum prison Monday seven months after his arrest in Juba, the largest town in the war-torn south, for aiding rebels, the paper Al Sudan Al Hadith (Modern Sudan) reported. It said Father Tombe was arrested when a radio transmitter was found in his church during an abortive attempt by the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) to capture Juba. The newspaper said the priest had confessed to being in possession of the radio set which was being used in the interests of "fifth columnists." The Catholic Church says the SPLA had forced Father Tombe to keep the radio in the church during their assault on Juba.

Ex-defence minister leaves advisory post in Egypt

CAIRO (R) — Field Marshal Abdul Halim Abu Ghazala, Egypt's former defence minister, resigned from his post as presidential advisor, Cairo newspapers reported Tuesday. The 63-year-old Abu Ghazala was seen in the late 1980s as a powerful contender to succeed Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. But in April 1989 he was removed from his post as defence minister, presiding over Egypt's 450,000-strong armed forces, and appointed advisor to the president without portfolio. Field Marshal Abu Ghazala, who became defence minister in 1981, built up a strong defence manufacturing base in Egypt and made the army economically powerful by establishing a range of other military industries.

Dubai allows business links with S. Africa

DUBAI (R) — The Emirate of Dubai has notified banks they may do business with South Africa, lifting a formal ban imposed on the republic in protest at its apartheid policies. The Dubai branch of the Israel Boycott Office, which also handled South African sanctions, told banks last week of the decision, an official at the boycott office said Tuesday. He said the director of the boycott office, Hikmat Saeed Jarbora, said in a statement to banks the lifting of the ban was in line with a Jan. 18 decision by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) cabinet. The UAE government decision was not reported at the time. "The banks can now inform importers and exporters they can do business with South Africa," the official said.

Court rejects Vanunu appeals over jail conditions

TEL AVIV (AP) — The supreme court has rejected three appeals by Israeli nuclear technician Mordechai Vanunu over the conditions of his detention, the justice ministry said Tuesday. Mr. Vanunu, who worked at the Dimona nuclear facility, was convicted in 1986 after he gave the Sunday Times of London information suggesting Israel had stockpiled at least 100 nuclear weapons, or the world's sixth largest atomic arsenal. The justice ministry refused to reveal the content of the appeals beyond saying they involved "conditions of detention." Mr. Vanunu is held in solitary confinement. He reportedly filed his own appeals.

Ghali asks Japan to send troops to join Somalia force

TOKYO (R) — U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali asked Japan Tuesday to commit troops to a new type of peacekeeping operation he envisages for Somalia.

He told NHK Television he would like to see Japanese troops take part in the proposed operation in Somalia, where U.S.-led multinational forces intervened late last year to safeguard food supplies to the starving and disarm gunmen.

The American-led forces are soon to be replaced by a U.N.-led force.

Japanese officials have said that Tokyo, under the constraint of its pacifist constitution, is legally barred from sending troops to Somalia because of the shaky ceasefire agreements among the dozen or so warring factions.

Dr. Ghali arrived in Japan Monday for a five-day visit. He met Emperor Akihito for lunch Tuesday and was due to hold talks with Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa later.

Dr. Ghali has suggested that the world body's conventional peacekeeping operations be upgraded to "peace-enforcing operations" which would allow the United Nations to take action

without the consent of warring factions.

The aim of such a force, outlined in his 1992 "Agenda for Peace," would be to deter aggression or avert civil war.

Dr. Ghali, whose comments to NHK were paraphrased by NHK in Japanese, said that if Japan's troops were not suited for such actions in Asia because of lingering wartime memories, they would be welcome in Africa and Europe.

Japan has given Dr. Ghali's idea moral support but has shied away from making a full commitment, because of strong pacifist sentiment in the country and a heated debate on suggestions that the 1947 constitution be revised.

Japan's new peacekeeping operations law bans its troops from taking part in U.N. "combat duties" such as the separation of warring groups.

The ban was written into the law because the U.S.-drafted constitution explicitly bars Tokyo from using military force to settle international disputes.

Japan's first peacekeeping contingent of 600 army engineers arrived in Cambodia last September to join a U.N. force there, the first such overseas deployment of troops since World War II.



U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali (right) and Japanese Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa inspect an honour guard during welcoming ceremony for Dr. Ghali in Tokyo Monday (AFP photo)

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 72111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 52 Sur La Une
19:00 News in French
19:15 Varieties
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
21:00 Saved by the Bell
21:30 One Step Ahead
22:00 Classic cars
22:30 News in English
23:00 Bodyline

PRAYER TIMES

06:55 Fajr
06:17 (Sunrise) Duha
14:58 Asr
17:26 Maghreb
18:44 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swellish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637141
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Torrens Church Tel. 623366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 625141

Anglican Church Tel. 63851, Tel. 62543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 653266
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624338
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 623624, 654932
Church of the Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
It will be fair during the day and relatively cold during the night. Winds will be southeasterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and sea calm.

Amman Min./Max. temp. 0 / 14
Aqaba 6 / 20
Dead Sea 2 / 14
Jordan Valley 5 / 19

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 4, Aqaba 15. Humidity readings: Amman 97 per cent, Aqaba 43 per

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Mohammad Al Nahawi 693925
Dr. Khalid M. Adli 743590
Dr. Ahmad Yusuf 786384
Dr. Mohammad Imam 612232
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 770334
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Narmuth pharmacy 626672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shamsan pharmacy 637660
Narmuth pharmacy 626672
Najib pharmacy 947632

DRIBD:
Dr. Ziad Al Aaraj (—)
Al Quds pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Tareq Hijawi 985445
Khalid pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Emergency 699
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891226
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 63021
Hotel Complaints 605883
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 640100

HOSPITALS

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 06-53200
Queen Alia Int'l. Airport 06-53200
AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 81381232
Khalid Maternity, J. Ann. 64428116
Al-Khaleel Maternity, J. Ann. 6424112
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsan 6647114
Shamsan Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital 6672279
The Islamic, Abdali 66612757
Al-Ahli, Abdali 6691646
Irfan, Al-Muhajira 7771013
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 77511126
Army, Marja 89161115
Queen Alia Hospital 60224950
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital 09198323
Zarqa National Hospital 09190560
Ion Sina Hospital 09196732

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. 0653200-3, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:45 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:15 Jeddah, Aqaba (RJ)
10:20 Larissa, Damascus (RJ)
09:25 Larissa, Damascus (RJ)
16:30 London (RJ)
17:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:30 Brussels, Paris (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

05:05 Istanbul (RJ)
18:00 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
18:45 Frankfurt, Rome (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

05:05 Dubai (AZ)
07:15 Karachi (PI)
08:35 Cairo (MS)
10:30 Jeddah (SU)
10:30 Sanaa (TV)
12:30 Damascus (PI)
18:10 Paris, Damascus (AF)
18:30 Vienna, Larissa (OS)
19:30 Beirut (ME)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

11:00 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
12:00 Rome, London (RJ)
12:30 Amsterdam, Istanbul (RJ)
12:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:30 Colombo (RJ)
20:00 Riyadh (RJ)
20:15 New Delhi (RJ)
20:45 Damascus (RJ)
21:30 Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)
22:45 Sanaa (RJ)
01:00 Aqaba, Cairo (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:25 Rome (AZ)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple 700/300
Banana 700/300
Beans (Mukhammar) 640/640
Beans 650/650
Cabbage 160/160
Carrot 230/180
Cauliflower 150/150
Cucumbers (large) 300/220
Cucumbers (small) 320/220
Eggplant 160/160
Garlic 180/120
Grapesfruit 270/200
Lemon 200/100
Marrow (small) 490/380
Mint 80/80
Onion (dry) 210/180
Onion (green) 240/180
Pepper (hot) 400/160
Pepper (sweet) 180/120
Potato 250/200
Tomato 130/100
Spinach 240/160

Deputy blasts amendment to segregate sexes in schools

AMMAN (Petra) — Lower House of Parliament Judiciary Committee member Fares Nabulsi has strongly objected to the introduction of an amendment to the Education Law of 1988 banning co-education in Jordanian government and private schools. The amendment, which is scheduled for debate in Parliament on Wednesday, exempts only kindergartens and the first four primary grades from the ban on mixed classes in the country.



Fares Al Nabulsi

Mr. Nabulsi maintains there is a big difference between a private setting between a man and woman or a boy and a girl and co-education where all students are taught together openly in school and at university.

mix elsewhere creates a double-standard practice in society, he added.

He said certain groups in the Jordanian society have no objection to co-education and therefore no law should be imposed to restrict their personal freedoms.

The deputy said the best solution is to offer the people a choice that coincides with their beliefs.

Mr. Nabulsi also maintains that banning children from mixing in schools could later require banning mixing at parties, rallies, public squares, government departments etc., which would sooner or later create numerous problems for society, he added.

Modern technology and communications have made the world look like a small village, he said, with the culture of one country open to others.

Labour Ministry to appoint women inspectors for areas employing predominantly women

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Labour plans to appoint women inspectors to follow up on implementation of labour-related laws in sectors employing women, Ministry Secretary General Saleh Tarawneh announced Tuesday.

He warned that strict measures would be applied against those employers who hire non-Jordanians without work permits.

Employers who violate the Labour Law will be forced to pay the cost of returning foreign workers to their home countries, Mr. Tarawneh said.

Foreign workers with valid work permits are to maintain the line of trade for which they had received their contracts, and inspectors must ensure that this arrangement is respected, the secretary general said.

leaves, occupational health and safety measures and other requirements.

The meeting comes on the heels of a government announcement that the residence, and aliens affairs law of 1974 will be strictly enforced, effective March 1.

According to the Labour Law, foreigners entering the country on a tourist or business visa can not change their status to an employee in Jordan during their stay in the Kingdom.

Those entering the country for work, according to the law, should acquire prior permission issued by their employers by the Ministry of Labour and the Interior Ministry.

Ministry report details Israel's escalating acts against Palestinians

AMMAN (Petra) — A report by the Foreign Ministry's Palestinian Affairs Department issued Tuesday in Amman gave details on the escalation of Israel's repressive actions against the Palestinian population in the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip last month.

In January, Israeli forces used clubs and batons to beat Arab women in the occupied territories and demolished 13 homes owned by Palestinian families, the report said.

The shelling of homes has become a normal practice by the Israeli occupation forces who continue to use live and rubber bullets in retaliation for stone-throwing by young Palestinians protesting the occupation, the report added.

Mosques have also become targets of Israeli troops who last month closed several mosques, according to the report.

Referring to taxes imposed on Palestinians, the report said the departure tax has been lifted from Israeli travellers, but Arabs leaving the occupied territories by land are still required to pay \$140 each for visits abroad and crossing into Jordan.

While these atrocities continue, Israel maintains its programmes of establishing settlements on Arab land, the report said.

From the start of the occupation in 1967 until last month, Israeli forces have confiscated 3,077,400 dunums of Arab-owned land in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to build these settlements, according to the report.

Ramadan charity campaign to receive JD10,000 from Social Development Ministry

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Social Development Tuesday announced a donation of 10,000 to the country-wide charity campaign to be launched at the beginning of the Holy month of Ramadan next Tuesday.

Minister of Social Development Amin Mashagbeh said in a statement that the donation reflects the ministry's backing of a campaign which will be organized by the Queen Alia Social Welfare Fund (QAF) to distribute assistance to Jordan's needy through the help of local organizations and private citizens.

He appealed to Jordanian citizens, particularly the wealthy, to offer tributes to help make this year's campaign equally successful.

FIS appeals

(Continued from page 1) official news agency APS, reporting the force statement, said originally that 100 people had been detained.

News of the arrests followed a weekend of violence in which six security force members and three fundamentalists were killed.

A minibus carrying children of gendarmes to school was also attacked and Defence Minister Khaled Nezzar narrowly escaped assassination by a car bomb.

Four defence lawyers appeared in the supreme court on Tuesday. Two of the original team are in custody, one suspected of smuggling out of prison a document signed by Mr. Belhadi calling for renewed violence.

Algiers radio said Mr. Belhadi would face a new trial over the document, classed as subversive.

At least 85 people were killed and more than 400 wounded in the June 1991 violence which brought army tanks and troops to the streets of the capital.

The unrest forced the postponement of Algeria's first multiparty general election until December 1991 when a first round was massively dominated by the FIS. A month later the authorities scrapped the poll. In March, the FIS was outlawed.

The gendarmes said later that two gunmen shot dead a chief warrant officer with the force in the centre of Blida on Tuesday.

Quoted by APS, it said Oumira Boulaem was "shot in the back by two terrorists as he got off a bus. He died shortly after."

Algiers Radio on Tuesday carried a taped police interview with one of the men arrested in the arms gang, who said: "I sold about 150 guns. Before (the unrest) a shotgun sold for about 7,000 dinars (\$335). Now they fetch 30,000 dinars (\$1,430)."

Crown Prince stresses humanitarian issues in pushing Mideast peace process forward

PARIS (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Monday briefed a group of French intellectuals on Jordan's democratic experiment, its role in the bilateral Arab-Israeli peace talks and Jordan's vision of the future of the region in the aftermath of the Gulf crisis.

Speaking at a meeting held at the Paris-based International Studies and Research Centre, Prince Hassan stressed the importance of maintaining balanced relations with the West, based on a comprehensive approach in dealing with regional and international issues.

The Crown Prince met with the president of the Institute of the Arab World in Paris, and discussed issues pertaining to the special conference on the Mediterranean region to be held in Spain.

Later he addressed a meeting of French academicians at the French Institute of International Relations, focusing on the relations between Europe and the Middle East.

The Crown Prince praised the role of Europe in pushing the Middle East peace process forward.

He said his Paris meetings are a continuation of his meetings in Germany last month, adding that there are common cultural and political dimensions of such meetings with international studies centres, which prepare files for European decision-makers.

In a telephone interview with Radio Jordan Tuesday Prince Hassan said there is a genuine European wish to create a new concept for dialogue between Europe and the Arab and Muslim Worlds.

He said Jordan, which hosts the Arab Thought Forum and the Academy of Islamic Civilisation Research, is qualified to host part of this expanded dialogue.

In response to a question on the stalemate in the Arab-Israeli peace talks caused by Israel's expulsion of more than 400 Palestinians from their homeland, the Crown Prince said Jordan is and has been committed to the search for peace since the June 5, 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

He added that Jordan has a principled stand and is looking for a comprehensive peace, but such comprehensive peace should give higher priority to human rights.

The expelled problem is not an exceptional case, but is a primary and principled one.

Prince Hassan said talking about massive and forcible expulsion reminds us that the Palestine question and the refugee problem are humanitarian issues.

He said civil, political, economic or social rights are an integral part of the search for peace, and that Jordan's principled stand on this issue calls for finding a clear solution to such excesses.

Asked about France and the European Community's vision of the Middle East peace process, Prince Hassan said "Europeans will adopt at a certain stage a vision, which might take the shape of the European declaration of principles vis-a-vis the regional security issues."

Prince Hassan voiced hope that such vision will go beyond the narrow issue of European security to cover the Mediterranean countries and the Asian edge of Europe.

On Jordanian-French relations, the Crown Prince said the visit of French President Francois Mitterrand to Amman reflects the special care directed by the French leadership to Jordan at this delicate stage.

He noted that the unique bilateral relations between Jordan and France have served as a basis for ensuring a supportive European stand for Jordan in his talks of the Brussels, Paris and London Clubs to reschedule Jordan's debt and support the Jordanian national economy.

The Senate also called on the five permanent members of the Security Council to stop Israel's attempts to invalidate the resolution, saying that Israel's action constitutes a dangerous precedent, which should not be allowed.

The Upper House stressed that the U.S.-Israeli deal does not rise to the level of adherence to or implementation of the resolution.

It added that the statement made by the Security Council president conflicts with the position expressed by the Council, which unanimously adopted the resolution.

The Senate requested the government to explain to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher during his forthcoming visit to Jordan the dangerous consequences that non-implementation of Resolution 799 will have on the peace process and the overall situation in the region.

The Senate urged the enhancement of inter-Arab coordination to achieve a minimum degree of solidarity in order to help the Arab parties involved in the peace process.

The Upper House recalled the statement issued by these Arab parties, including Jordan, Syria, Egypt, Lebanon and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, on Dec. 24, which called on the international community to shoulder its responsibility by pressuring Israel into surrendering to the international community's will.

The statement condemned Israel's expulsion of more than 400 Palestinians from their homeland, saying such expulsion constitutes a flagrant violation of Israel's commitments under the Fourth Geneva Convention.

The Senate called on the Security Council to force Israel to return the Palestinian expellees to their homes immediately and to implement all Security Council resolutions, noting that the resolutions are not subject to compromise or selectivity.

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Senate condemns Israel's attempt to manipulate 799

AMMAN (Petra) — The Upper House of Parliament (Senate) Tuesday condemned Israel's attempts to manipulate the United Nations Security Council Resolution 799, which calls for the immediate repatriation of all the Palestinians expelled to southern Lebanon.

In a statement issued Tuesday, the Senate called for the full and immediate implementation of Resolution 799, passed on Dec. 18, 1992.

The statement condemned Israel's expulsion of more than 400 Palestinians from their homeland, saying such expulsion constitutes a flagrant violation of Israel's commitments under the Fourth Geneva Convention.

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Economic Forum

Statistical disclosure

By Dr. Abdallah Malki

Accurate and timely statistics are necessary not only for conducting scientific research but also for making the right policy decisions. Marketing, promotion and even propaganda campaigns gain enormous credibility when they employ accurate data. We frequently argued that statistical development is part and parcel of successful overall economic development and an indispensable device to listen to the pulse of the economy.

Suppose statistics indicate that the economic growth in a certain country is phenomenal in a given year, but, nevertheless, the unemployment rate remains stubbornly high. The manager of economic policy must conclude that he faces a statistical illusion and should ask his staff to dig up the faulty statistic. In this case, the economic growth rate may be statistically overstated. The alternative is to know which is which, because each alternative warrants different remedies and consequently different policy measures.

Take another exemplary case. A reading is taken and shows that the unemployment rate stands at around 25 per cent. One

year later, a second reading shows that the rate sinks to 18 per cent. The politicians will jump to the conclusion that the policy measures taken during the year were very conducive to combating unemployment and therefore will stick to them. The fact of the matter could be tragically different. We started in this case from wrong data; the actual unemployment rate was initially very close to 18 per cent and what was achieved was merely statistical illusion.

Let us go back to Jordan. The performance of the Jordanian economy is monitored constantly and closely under the IMF-sponsored adjustment programme. Very important decisions relating to the economy and the livelihood of Jordanians are made on the basis of statistical indicators that measure that performance. It follows that these statistics must be as accurate as possible and that they should be released as quickly as possible lest they should be useless and sometimes misleading. Some sort of extra effort should be made to expedite and facilitate the compilation of data, processing and releasing them thereafter.

And such data should be disclosed not only to policy-makers but also to all parties. The releasing of selected favourable bits

and pieces of the data and blacking out others or making them accessible only to interested politicians and lucky observers not only undermines their credibility and that of the adjustment programme but also paves the way for making and perpetuating mistakes. The country, the economy and the people will be victims of statistical gimmicks and mirages.

The free and easy access to information is one deep-rooted practice of democracy. The logic and spirit of free-marketism ban monopolistic practices, especially monopolising information. More reliable data, timely publication of statistics and free and easy accessibility to facts is good for any scheme of economic reform than otherwise. What is worse than making an error is concealing it. Sometimes what should be made public is not the statistic itself but also what assumptions were made in cutting it out. There is no danger for one economic indicator in any given year to miss the target as long as there is a preparedness to acknowledge the miss and thereafter to rectify the error or the means accordingly.

Problem law in the making

MUCH HOPE is being pinned on the quality of education in Jordan as the most effective way for multi-dimensional progress. His Majesty King Hussein has repeatedly mentioned this topic and called on the country to advance its educational system in order to provide a favourable intellectual climate for its democratisation process. Against this backdrop, the draft law on education that is coming up for debate by the Lower House of Parliament has several aspects that require much deliberation and thought. There is no excuse to rush into adopting a new legislation prior to full examination of its merits or demerits including of course its implications on future generations. One particular controversy rests on Article 44 of the proposed law which aims to segregate the sexes beyond the fourth elementary class. Unfortunately the House's judicial and educational committees have already endorsed this provision and submitted it to Parliament for precipitous adoption. On this score, we cannot disagree more with these two committees and urge that the House think many times before accepting it.

Segregation on the basis of gender has many sides to it, and obviously there are pros and cons to either accepting or rejecting it as a phenomenon in social life in general and in schools in particular. For starters, keeping girls away from boys in public places has precarious basis in terms of religion. The tenets of Islam prescribe secluded contacts between unmarried adults. The mixing of girls and boys in schools, however, cannot by any reasonable stretch of the mind be construed as repugnant to religion per se. Besides, in this new climate of freedom and democracy, parents should be accorded the right of free choice as to how to bring up their children. If fathers and mothers freely choose to send their children to desegregated schools, that is their business. The government must not and cannot legislate on every detail of peoples' lives, especially when their earthly requirements are legitimate and reasonable. Jordanians who are opposed to segregating their children on the basis of sex should be free to do so. Likewise, parents who see merit in desegregation should also enjoy the same right.

Admittedly there are sex-related crimes committed because of over relaxation of the rules and guidelines on the mixing of the sexes during adolescence. By the same token there are many sex-related crimes that are also attributed to strict desegregation of the sexes. There is a tendency to brush aside or sweep under the carpet sex-related crimes that occur in this very country which are solely attributable to overzealous separation of males from females. There is no room here to chronicle such crimes. But suffice to say that the country is beleaguered with a rather high rate of sexual crimes that could be avoided had the country introduced earlier on more healthy, free and candid relations first between boys and girls and later on between men and women.

Parliament is called upon therefore to double its scrutiny of the draft law on education, not only on account of segregation of girls from boys but also because of the other controversial features of the new legislation. Each and every dimension of the draft legislation calls for special perusal and until this is done, the proposed law should remain a mere proposal.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily said that Jordan was quick to recognise the newly Islamic republics of the former Soviet Union and to bolster its ties with them culturally, economically and politically. The delegation now touring these republics reflects the Kingdom's keenness on maintaining strong ties that would open new horizons of cooperation in the future, said the paper. By directing the delegation to this important mission, King Hussein has blunted Israel's feverish attempts to win the favour of the Islamic republics and turn them against the Arab World, the paper said. It was a very wise move on the part of Jordan to prevent Israel from attaining its sinister aims and at the same time bolster ties with the Islamic nations, the paper continued. The numerous agreements reached with the Islamic republics during the tour will no doubt open the way for a good and strong level of cooperation with countries that could render support to the Arab just causes, the paper added. By aborting Israel's civil attempts, Jordan has paved the ground for the Islamic republics to deal directly with their Arab and Muslim brothers in economic, cultural and political fields, said the daily. The paper expressed hope that the tour will now bear fruit and manifest its outcome in a most favourable and positive manner benefiting the two sides.

AMID CIRCUMSTANCES that call for desperation and frustration in view of the Arab Nation's weakness in the face of the continuing challenges, the Arab countries open a meeting in Cairo Tuesday, at the level of permanent representatives, to study the situation in the Palestinian lands, said Al-Dustour in an editorial Tuesday. The paper said that the meeting in Cairo coincides with a rise in the terrorist activities and an escalation, by Israel, of intimidating action against the Palestinian population. While we realise the weakness in the Arab position vis-a-vis Israel and its practices, and in view of the continuing differences among Arab regimes, once cannot attach any hope to such meetings said the daily. Indeed, the Arab masses realise in advance the feeble actions if any, that are expected from the Arabs to deter the Zionist enemy and to put an end to the sufferings of their Palestinian kinsmen under occupation, the paper continued.

By Charles Oulton

WHO WORKS harder, the man at the office, or the woman at home looking after the children?

An honest man would answer: in most cases the woman. From the moment she is woken by the children, she is on duty until she is allowed to retire to bed after making the supper, doing the washing up, and checking to ensure that the man has an ironed

shirt for the morning.

The get-out clause for the man has always been that he is too tired to do the domestic chores because he is the family breadwinner. From now on, he will have to think of another excuse.

According to a survey published today, women have an equal right to be regarded as the breadwinner if you calculate how much it would be calculated to pay someone else to do their work in

the home — the average is over £18,000 a year, more than the salaries of 70 per cent of the working population.

And a wife with a child under one would compete with managers and professionals earning £457 a week.

The bargain most men take for granted is calculated by Legal and General insurance, which broke down the average housewife's weekly timetable and evaluated the

domestic chores using hourly wage rates from employment agencies.

These are the savings: Nanny, 17.9 hours at £5.90 per hour, £105.61; cook, 12.2 at £5.35, £65.27; cleaner, 12.2 at £5.35, £65.27; laundress, 9.3 at £3.80, £35.34; shopper, 0.4 at £3.80, £1.52; dishwasher, 5.7 at £3.80, £21.66; driver, 2.6 at £5.90, £15.34; gardener, 1.4 at £5.90, £8.26; seamstress, 1.7 at £3.60, £6.12; other, 1.3 at £4.00, £5.20. Total: 70.7 hrs, £348.75.

When comparing the value of a woman's work at home with other jobs, the housewife is worth more than a train driver (£3.99) and plumber (£3.15); while a housewife with one child under one compares favourably with a production manager (£454) or a teacher (£436).

One statistic for men to heed is that women with jobs still work long hours at home; those with part-time jobs averaged 59 hours at home, while those in full-time work did 49 hours of domestic work, on top of a 40-hour week. A nationally representative sample of 1,001 married women with dependent children took part in the survey; 57 per cent were not in paid employment, 35 per cent worked part time and 10 per cent worked full time. — The Independent.

LETTERS

Look who's talking!

To the Editor:

As a layperson regarding politics I fail to understand the decision taken by the U.N. Security Council on Resolution 799 and its "full" implementation.

Anybody could figure out the double standards of the West, now including the U.N., (as puppet), regarding the Arab World (exclude the wealthy lot).

The recent visit of Shimon Peres to the U.N., his manipulatory division of the resolution and, amazingly, satisfying the Security Council puzzles me, and the rest of the sensible world, I'm sure. His comments, on not wanting to turn the situation in Palestine like Bosnia is preposterous and ridiculous. Look who is talking! It is that he, and others like him both in Israel and the West, is either ignorant or sheer stupid.

I believe that if the Israeli government keeps on with these beating around the bush tactics and behave like spoiled brats, they would wholly be responsible for the next major world disaster in the Holy Land as a whole, including the so-called West-created Israel.

If blowing up innocent people's homes in winter, shedding innocent blood, throwing out people on deserted lands in life threatening weather conditions without reason is not a crime, and the work of a criminal country (U.S.-backed), then what is?

The United Nations, which till now was a highly esteemed entity, is unfortunately losing grounds and credibility. We hope it will open its eyes before it is too late.

Dr. Barbara Burgan,
P.O. Box 2343,
Amman.

Just say it!

To the Editor:

We in Jordan, can surprise ourselves, sometimes, at our ability to create and innovate. Trophies would start pouring on us if there ever were a competition on how to promote a certain occasion. One cannot imagine what some people can do when struck by love!

This writer, like many other normal human beings in the world, came under the spell, during the last few days, as to how best he could impress the person he likes most on Valentine's Day.

The options were clear and few. Either buy a pack of well trimmed red roses, or mail a nicely worded Valentine card, or wrap up a small bottle of exotic perfume. But he is not the type that likes to be typical!

Then, fortunately, some reasoning prevailed: Why not look up the papers for a cozy place to celebrate the romantic occasion?

To his relief, he found that many establishments of entertainment were strongly competing to offer the best bargain in town.

The following is a random list of what was offered:

Some establishments promised surprise gifts for the ladies only. Others ventured into cleaning the mystery by specifying that these gifts would be "red roses"! Others went even further by promising the "gentlemen" some chocolate! They failed to mention whether the chocolate was in the shape of bars, hearts, or cubes. Or was that the real "thriller"?

One establishment decided that the place to be on Valentine's Day was one of its "rooms"! Does that ring any bell?

Salim Ayoub,
Amman.

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King calls for fostering democracy

(Continued from page 1)

Jordanian-Palestinian confederation was the future perception of that any such choice would be made in an atmosphere of freedom and democracy following the full restoration of the Palestinians' rights.

King Hussein called on Arabs to contribute to shaping the present and future and to safeguard their rights and stressed the importance of openness. "We are a nation that has had its valuable contribution in enriching the march of humanity and the time will come when we have to give more than what we take," the King said.

King Hussein called for applying justice fairly and squarely to all people and all issues and affirmed that Arab causes were not causes.

The King attributed the race by many countries to acquire arms of massive destruction to the absence of justice and fairness.

In an apparent reference to the Gulf crisis, King Hussein said: "This era could have been the golden era for the Arab Nation, given the great and enormous resources, had it not been for the latest tragedy which drained billions of the Arab resources which could otherwise have been used for meeting Arab needs and laying internal and foreign Arab debts."

He warned of "certain extremist groups which have certain objectives and intentions might attempt to offend to our religion in one way or another."

"Therefore it is our duty to defend our faith and Islam, without which we will have no presence or value," the King said.

"We should move on consciously and in a well-planned manner so as to prepare for our present and future despite the challenges that are facing us," the King said, stressing that Jordan would never retract from the path of democracy and freedom and human rights.

He said his visit to Yarmouk University came as part of the Kingdom's initiatives to support Jordanian universities and offer incentives to distinguished teaching staff members and excellent students. "This visit gives me personally a new wave of confidence for achieving our aspired goals and aims," he said.

The King said that his tour of the various facilities at the university made him feel that Jordan had achieved great progress in spite of the many obstacles and challenges facing it.

Stressing that Jordan's duty now is to continue to raise the banner of the Great Arab Revolt with all its meanings and goals, King Hussein voiced hope that Jordan would continue its march on the path of democracy and underline the importance of preserving the freedom of expression.

"The names of Jordanian universities are of great significance, embodying the history and march of the nation, which adds to the great burdens and responsibilities of these universities," the King said.

The King said he had always shared with officials at the Jordanian universities the belief that more should be done to achieve more and to provide for the youth every possible chance to enable

them to perform their duty in serving their country.

Researches and scientific studies conducted by universities, he said, should be taken into consideration at government departments. The government is now discussing the need to establish a department which has the power to deal with the results and recommendations of studies conducted by Jordanian academic institutions.

University President Ali Mahafza delivered an address welcoming King Hussein and underlining the grave challenges facing the Arab Nation.

"Challenges facing Jordan are grave and cannot be separated from the challenges facing the Arab Nation," he said.

The university president said that scientific research would be ineffective and fruitless unless the decision-makers take it into consideration and exploit it when tackling problems.

This way, he added, Jordan can create an interaction between universities and higher education centres on the one hand and the skilled labour force in public and private institutions on the other with the aim of developing the Kingdom according to well-established principles.

King Hussein's tour of the university included the radio and television studios at the journalism department, the fine arts department and the institute of archaeology and anthropology.

King Hussein was accompanied by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shakar and Royal Court Chief Khaled Al Karaki.

Christopher does not expect go-ahead

(Continued from page 1)

designed to arrange a summit between President Bill Clinton and Russian President Boris Yeltsin. It has high priority because of pressures on Mr. Yeltsin.

The Clinton administration has held off inviting Arabs and Israelis to return to Washington peace talks.

Mr. Christopher and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin agreed Feb. 1 on a compromise to repatriate all the 396 Palestinians on a tent encampment in Lebanon by the end of the year, and

about 100 of them immediately.

The U.N. Security Council last Friday called the agreement "a step in the right direction." Mr. Rabin declared an end to the crisis Sunday and Mr. Christopher told reporters Tuesday "we thought the action taken at the U.N. last Friday was a positive action."

But, he said, "before I get out to the region and talk to all the parties it would be somewhat presumptuous of me to conclude they (the peace talks) can begin immediately."

Mr. Christopher said, "I do

think the portents are very good."

Hanan Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinians, said Saturday the deal had "no validity" and represented "a blow to the integrity of the Security Council and another attempt at bailing Israel out."

Mr. Peres, posing for pictures with Mr. Christopher at the state department, said peace was in the interest of all parties.

He said those who criticised Israel for not observing a council resolution opposing "the expulsions should 'pay attention' to the council's acceptance of the U.S.-Israeli compromise."

Arab League condemns Israeli 'tyranny'

(Continued from page 1)

peace talks. "The delegates strongly condemn the repressive Israeli practices... the new Israeli methods of lowering up homes and emptying the land of its residents are a gross violation of the simplest rules of human and international law," Dr. Abdul Meguid said. Dr. Abdul Meguid also said that Israel's offer to repatriate 11 of the more than 400 Palestinians it expelled on Dec. 17 and

return the rest by the end of the year does not comply fully with U.N. Security Council Resolution 799 that calls on the Jewish state to take all the men back immediately.

"We call for the implementation of the resolution and the immediate return of all of them," Dr. Abdul Meguid said.

The Arab League delegates met to discuss the escalation of violence in the occupied West Bank and Gaza.

Yusseini: Israeli assertions insincere

(Continued from page 1)

Several masked Palestinian activists shook hands with Mr. Yusseini and fired guns in the air. Some were from Palestinian factions supporting the peace process, but others were from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, which opposes the current negotiations. "The backers of Hamas chanted 'this is not peace, this is surrender,'" he said.

In the occupied West Bank,

meanwhile, soldiers arrested a 20-year-old Palestinian suspected of leading a gang called the Black Panthers that attacked Israelis and Arabs accused as collaborators, the army said.

The suspect, Usama Khalid Silawi, was seized in the town of Jenin with a pistol and later surrendered a sub-machinegun, an army statement said. Israel army radio said Silawi was a leader of the Fateh faction in Jenin.

Palestinians seek compromise deal

(Continued from page 1)

Palestinian participation in the peace talks. Iraq had previously blasted the peace process as "sell-out of the Palestinian issue."

During a trip to Baghdad and Cairo earlier this month, PLO officials said, the chairman also found initial willingness from the two sides towards reconciliation and mend relations which were severely damaged following the Gulf crisis. Mr. Arafat's visitation efforts and Baghdad's blessing of the peace process were described by a PLO insider as "a blow to the position camp, most of whom are based in a country (Iraq) that is interested in ending negotiations with Israel with or without the Palestinians."

At the Palestinian leadership, PLO insiders said, has been exceptionally cautious towards Hamas in how it handles the expulsion crisis.

If the PLO decides to leave victims stranded in south-Lebanon and decides to resume negotiations with Israel, Hamas would certainly more support in the Palestinian street," said a Palestinian analyst.

On the other side, the PLO

its Arab partners in the peace talks before Mr. Christopher arrives in the area to jumpstart the negotiations. Syria and Lebanon have stated their intention of continuing the peace talks regardless of the outcome of the expulsion crisis.

Jordan, however, has requested that the U.S. refrain from sending it an invitation to the negotiations until the evictees' crisis is resolved. But Jordanian fears over Israel's focus on the Syrian track of the negotiations could press the Kingdom to attend, isolating the Palestinians, analysts added. Palestinian officials have also complained that its Arab partners, mainly Syria, have avoided holding a coordination meeting of their foreign ministers before Mr. Christopher's Mideast tour.

Some PLO officials, however, told the Jordan Times that regardless of Arab and U.S. pressures, the Palestinians will most likely, or at least should, boycott the next round of talks if a better deal for the evictees is not provided.

"There is nothing further to lose if we boycott the talks even if the rest of the Arabs attend," said a PLO official on condition of anonymity.

Mr. Abed Rabbo, meanwhile, criticised what he described as Israel's "aim of in-

entionally delaying any progress on the Palestinian track of the negotiations with the purpose of implementing (Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak) Rabin's scheme to normalise relations with the Arab countries."

Struggling to make the "right" decision on how to cope with expulsion crisis and the peace talks, sources close to the PLO leadership said, Mr. Arafat was "strongly advised not to accept any deal which is not guaranteed to succeed on all fronts."

These sources revealed that during Mr. Arafat's recent visit to Cairo, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak offered a deal whereby Israel would immediately return 170 of the evictees and the rest would be transferred to Israel's self-declared "security zone" in South Lebanon for six months. Apparently, Mr. Arafat was cautious and asked for a clarification on Mr. Rabin's position on this offer before taking a decision. Mr. Rabin had rejected the deal after hearing it, but the sources said that this rejection appeared aimed at paving the way to make it acceptable to the Palestinians first.

But such a deal, some compromise-seekers within the PLO said, could be enough for the Palestinians to resume its negotiations.

Biodiversity — a matter of survival

By Nazih Bandak

There are more than 30 million different species of plants and animals on earth but slightly over one million have been described and named. It is said that species diversity in the warm tropics is nearly six times greater than in northern Europe. Scientists studying a small area of 15 hectares in Borneo identified a number of tree species equivalent to that known throughout all of North America. Unfortunately, if our current lifestyle continues, we could easily wipe out one quarter of all the earth's species over the next 20 years.

The genetic variation in wild species is substantially important for the development of agriculture, industry, and many other fields. Wild species are used to improve the characteristics of

crops and domesticated animals. For example, without the genes from a wild species of Indonesian sugar cane, cane sugar production would not be feasible in the world today. In India and some African countries, cassava yields have been increased tenfold by rendering the crops more resistant to disease using genes from a wild species.

Although the geographical location of Jordan engenders great diversity, there is a decline in habitats that support the country's wild species. In Jordan, there is a heavy reliance on the use of agrochemicals in order to combat crop diseases and boost yields. While input of genetic material from the unspoiled natural environment can increase the ability of crops to withstand

pathogens, spraying chemicals, which often make the parasites and agents of plant diseases more resistant, leads to ever increasing dose requirements. A recent study by Cornell University indicated that for the last 45 years, pesticide application has increased worldwide by one million per cent, whereas crop losses due to pests have climbed by 20 per cent.

Agenda 21, a product of a diligent effort by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), is a global blueprint for action to preserve the wild species of the world. In setting out the programme areas of the agenda, sight was set on the 21st century; hence the name. Although not legally binding,

Agenda 21 involves a political and moral commitment at the highest level for every country. It integrates the guidelines and recommendations that relate to the programmes and goals of both the environment and development.

Preserving genetic diversity and promoting the sustainable utilisation of species and ecosystems is the only available recourse to mankind to maintain the essential ecological processes that support human life on this planet. We should regard the depletion of the variety of genes and species as a serious environmental problem and pay heed to biodiversity conservation as a survival-related issue.

There are numerous ways, contemplated worldwide, to curb the threat facing genetic resources and biological variation. Among these, the most viable option (or doing so in Jordan lies in enclosing and protecting the remaining rich natural habitats and fostering the existing system of wildlife and nature reserves which spread across the Kingdom.

The writer is an environmental scientist with a local firm and former assistant director general of the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature in Jordan. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.



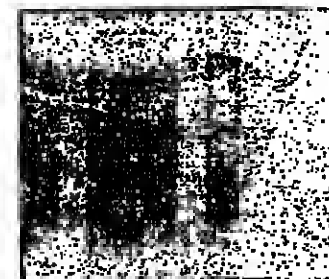
RED-CROWNED CRANE: Its eggs are still prized by cooks



SNOW LEOPARD: Poachers seek its valuable pelt



GIANT PANDA: Inbreeding threatens to weaken the species

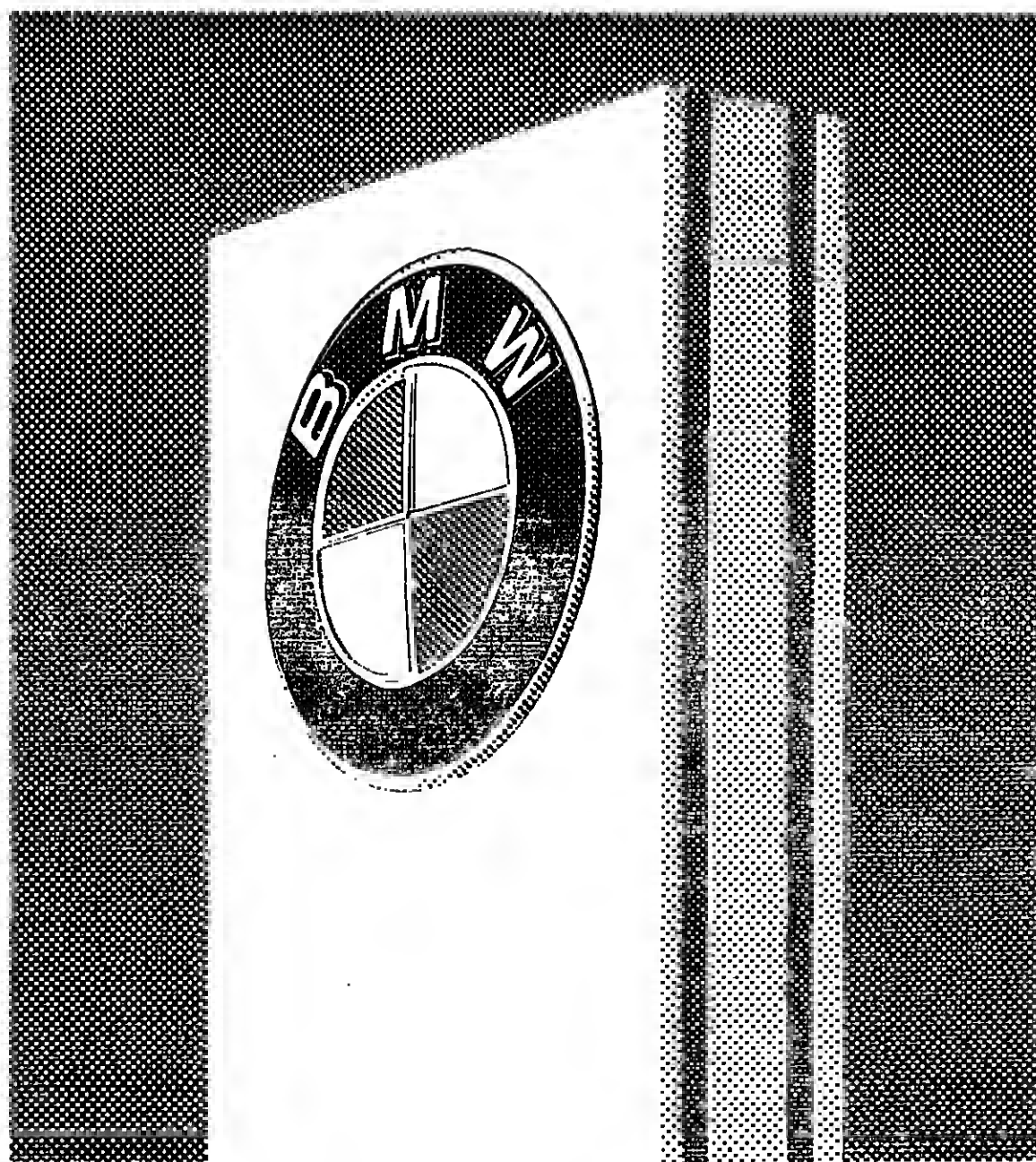


TIBETAN YAK: The vast herds no longer rule the plateau



GIBBON: Pet traffickers ship live gibbons to Taiwan

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The ultimate driving machine

Saudi finance minister sees Gulf Arabs repatriating capital



Muhammad Abal Khail

BAHRAIN (R) — Gulf Arabs, who hold more than \$100 billion in Western and Japanese banks, will switch their funds back home as lucrative local investment opportunities appear, Saudi Finance Minister Muhammad Abal Khail said Tuesday.

Gulf Arab investors emerged from the war with Iraq with renewed confidence that has already brought significant capital repatriation to the region, he said.

"There is considerable evidence of significant capital repatriation rather than capital flight... since early in 1991," he told an economic conference in Bahrain.

Sheikh Abal Khail cited figures from the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) showing Saudi private investors alone repatriated more than \$10 billion in

financial assets previously held in Western and Japanese banks in the 18 months to June 1992.

Referring to the BIS figure of \$100 billion in private Gulf holdings in the banks of developed countries, he said that "as we have seen recently in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere, these funds will return to the region when good local investment opportunities present themselves."

He called on foreign companies to invest in joint ventures with GCC firms to take advantage of the Gulf boom.

Sheikh Abal Khail said the Gulf crisis proved Gulf economies "to be enormously more flexible than even the most optimistic projections could have assumed."

Speaking at the conference organised by the Bahrain Information Ministry and the financial information group Telerate, he said "perhaps some have not yet appreciated that local investors have emerged from the crisis at a period with a renewed sense of confidence."

Saudi banks, for example, had increased domestic private sector lending in every quarter of the past two-and-a-half years, with several increasing their lending more than three-fold since June 1990, he said.

He said Saudi bank deposits declined in the third quarter of 1990, immediately after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

But "they quickly stabilised and then a sharp recovery set in by the second quarter of 1991."

Another pointer to the economic boom cited by Sheikh Abal Khail was the proliferation of new issues of the Saudi stock market.

"Beginning in 1991, we have had a major new stock issue floated, on average, every six to eight weeks, and all issues have been heavily over-subscribed," he said.

"While various areas in the world are faced with a lack of financial resources available for investment (Gulf states) fortunately have ample financial resources for new investment," he said, adding that the expanding Gulf market could well support such investment.

Bahrain Finance Minister Ibrahim Abdul Karim said first estimates put real economic growth in the six states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) at three to four per cent compared with the declines of the previous two years.

He told the conference forecasts for 1993 put real growth substantially higher at five to six per cent even if there was only a modest increase in the price of oil, the main source of wealth of the GCC states — Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

5-year plan to reduce unemployment to 9.2%

Minister unveils new path to boost Jordan's growth

By Samir Shafiq
Special to the Jordan Times



Ziyad Fariz

AMMAN — Planning Minister Ziyad Fariz Monday night unveiled the main features of Jordan's new 5-year economic plan (1993-1997) which, in essence, overturns all previous priorities and strategies and ushers the Kingdom into a totally different era.

Speaking at the sixth monthly economic forum organised by the Jordanian Businessmen Association, Dr. Fariz told a large group of prominent businessmen and senior government officials that 1989 was the year when the country had to change its economic course.

Until 1989, he said, Jordanian governments always adopted policies to lure investors into setting up and expanding import-substitute industries which required various forms of protection at different stages.

To enable import-substitute industries pass the stage of initial production and then to ensure that these industries were able to fulfill the local market needs, Dr. Fariz explained, various governments were entangled in all kinds of protection measures ranging from a total ban on some imports to imposing high customs on others to curb their inflow and to allow local industries to prosper.

Dr. Fariz said the old economic policies were not all that bad because, at the time, the industrial sector grew and its share in the gross domestic product increased from five per cent to 15 per cent by the late 1980s. But, the planning minister pointed out, these policies did not succeed in curbing imports which kept on swelling.

The planning minister said that as a result, the deficit in the balance of payments soared and, coupled with declining remittances from Jordanian expatriates and shrinking financial Arab aid, many problems surfaced and the structural distortions in the Kingdom's economy were exposed.

Prices went up by 26 per cent in 1989, the budget deficit reached 21 per cent of the gross domestic

product, the foreign debt surged to \$7.7 billion and, according to Dr. Fariz, debt service swallowed 56 per cent of Jordan's total exports or more than a third of the gross domestic product.

The 1989 economic upheaval therefore heralded a new era whereby an adjustment programme was adopted and a new economic vision emerged, the minister said.

Under the new strategy, the core element for the country's sustained growth was seen as being in industrial exports, he pointed out.

Dr. Fariz said emphasis was laid on industrial exports because the industrial sector is the only one which can create large employment opportunities and because this sector can be the driving force to other sectors, mainly the services linked to industrial operations.

But, since the Jordanian market alone would not be able to give the industrial sector the required boost and the potential to absorb large numbers of job-seekers who enter the labour market at a rate of 40,000 a year, the minister emphasised that the required industrial growth needs expanding market outlets where Jordanian industrial products can gain footholds through better quality and cheaper prices.

As such, he noted, production would increase and efficiency would improve.

Dr. Fariz was, however, quick to point out that the fortunes of the industrial sector would not increase in an economic climate of high inflation and subsequent higher costs of industrial inputs and higher wages.

He stressed that financial and monetary stability were prerequisites to ensure a sound climate to attract investments and boost growth.

Against this background, the 5-year economic plan envisages a six per cent annual growth on the average, a reduction in the budget deficit of no more than five per cent of the gross domestic

product and a balance in the current account of the balance of payments at the end of the period.

Other targets in the plan include:

1. Reducing the foreign debt from 141 per cent of the gross domestic product in 1992 to 100 per cent at the end of 1997.
2. Keeping price stability within a four per cent range per year.
3. Creating 231,000 new jobs and lowering unemployment from 17 per cent in 1991 to 9.2 per cent by 1997.
4. Reducing debt servicing from 31 per cent of gross domestic product in 1992 to only 22 per cent.

Dr. Fariz, reiterating the government's keenness to pursue the interests of the private sector, affirmed the government's determination to gradually relinquish its role in the economy and called on the private sector to live up to its national responsibilities.

The minister told the businessmen that many policies and structures currently being formulated, like the sales tax draft, are being criticised when in fact they all work to the benefit of the private sector in the long term.

Dr. Fariz responded to some remarks that blamed the government for failing to give the industrial sector a real 30-50 per cent customs protection saying: "Enough for protection... enough inefficiency."

"Had it been left to me, I would not have given even that much protection," he elaborated.

He pointed out that by lowering the budget deficit, the government's needs for banking credit would be less and therefore the private sector would have more funds for its utilisation.

Moreover, he added, the cost of funds would decrease and consequently, the pricing level would remain relatively stable.

The minister made it clear that current international trade practices were moving away from the old style of trade protocols towards freeing commerce at large and, as such, Jordanians should seek external markets where they can compete freely with better quality at cheaper prices.

Dr. Fariz expanded on another area which he saw as supplementary to the new industrial concept. He said that Jordanians had been accustomed for so many years to view the government and the import business as the main bodies involved in services and this concept was a major problem in Jordan's economic structure.

"What we will be striving for in the coming years is shifting the services sector to service the export drive and, as a result, create new employment opportunities," Dr. Fariz said.

The planning minister stressed that the public sector would not be able to recruit many more job-seekers in the future and that the new government role would be in enhancing the investment climate, eliminating administrative bottlenecks and providing supportive services only.

Financial Markets

in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	London Close Date: 16/2/93	Tokyo Close Date: 16/2/93
Sterling Pound	1.4180	1.4250
Deutsche Mark	1.6586	1.6525
Swiss Franc	1.5418	1.5360
French Franc	5.6074	5.5903 **
Japanese Yen	120.93	120.62
European Currency Unit	1.1726	1.1765 **

USD Per STG
** European Opening @ 8:00 a.m. GMT

European Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.12	3.18	3.31	3.62
Sterling Pound	6.00	5.93	5.62	5.63
Deutsche Mark	9.25	8.31	7.67	7.23
Swiss Franc	5.62	5.50	5.31	5.06
French Franc	11.50	11.50	10.65	9.35
Japanese Yen	5.15	3.12	3.12	3.12
European Currency Unit	9.62	9.50	9.18	8.56

Interest bid rates for months beginning U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Previous Metals

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	328.85	6.40	Silver	3.69	0.60

* 21 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Date: 16/2/93

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.692	0.694
Sterling Pound	0.9851	0.9900
Deutsche Mark	0.4185	0.4208
Swiss Franc	0.4500	0.4523
French Franc	0.1237	0.1243
Japanese Yen	0.5732	0.5741
Dutch Guilder	0.3715	0.3734
Swedish Krona	0.0923	0.0928
Italian Lira	0.0448	0.0450
Belgian Franc	0.02028	0.02038

* Per 100

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.6140	1.6290
Lebanese Lira	0.0380	0.0410
Saudi Riyal	0.1641	0.1650
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.2250	2.2900
Qatari Riyal	0.1874	0.1886
Egyptian Pound	0.1950	0.2150
Omani Riyal	1.7610	1.7830
UAE Dirham	0.1674	0.1686
Greek Drachma	0.3175	0.3175
Cypriot Pound	1.3909	1.4019

* Per 100

CAR Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	14/2/93	Close	15/2/93	Close
All-Share	195.15		194.20	
Banking Sector	157.12		136.78	
Insurance Sector	214.60		214.38	
Industry Sector	275.22		273.33	
Services Sector	258.28		256.92	

December 31, 1990 = 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

One U.S. dollar	1.2522/27	Canadian dollar	1.6478/88
	1.8600/10	Deutsche marks	1.5263/73
	34.04/07	Dutch guilders	5.5720/70
	1546/1548	Belgian francs	120.01/06
	7.4880/980	French francs	6.3250/350
	7.0150/250	Italian lire	1.4340/50
	6.3250/350	Japanese yen	\$329.00/329.50
		Swedish crowns	
		Norwegian crowns	
		Danish crowns	

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME	PREV. CLOSING	OPENING	PRICE	PRICE
ABN BANK	15,980	134,000	133,300	133,350	
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	12,055	4,910	4,850	4,830	
STATE OF JORDAN	9,384	23,000	23,000	23,000	
JORDAN DEVELOPMENT BANK	14,815	3,890	3,870	3,750	
JORDAN FINANCIAL BANK	2,750	2,460	2,390	2,400	
JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	12,148	5,200	5,100	4,950	
JORDAN SECURITIES BANK	17,931	4,480	4,480	4,460	
JORDAN TRADING BANK	6,313	3,320	3,170	3,120	
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	4,105	5,700	5,700	5,680	
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	41,800	1,750	1,750	1,710	
JORDAN BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	10,215	3,750	3,670	3,560	
JORDAN SECURITIES	1,325	2,750	2,710	2,710	
JORDAN SECURITIES	42,560	3,750	3,800	3,800	
JORDAN SECURITIES	17,500	2,820	2,820	2,820	
JORDAN SECURITIES	7,600	3,800	3,800	3,800	
JORDAN SECURITIES	4,805	3,170	3,150	3,130	
JORDAN SECURITIES	32,491	1,000	1,000	1,000	
JORDAN SECURITIES	1,464	1,080	1,060	1,040	
JORDAN SECURITIES	2,500	2,600	2,600	2,600	
JORDAN SECURITIES	29,488	0,880	0,920	0,860	
JORDAN SECURITIES	17,771	5,780	5,780	5,780	
JORDAN SECURITIES	12,038	7,740	7,740	7,720	
JORDAN SECURITIES	19,924	0,840	0,840	0,840	
JORDAN SECURITIES	1,123	1,250	1,250	1,250	
JORDAN SECURITIES	31,516	2,330	2,340	2,300	
JORDAN SECURITIES	34,959	3,520	3,520	3,510	
JORDAN SECURITIES	10,450	4,660	4,700	4,750	
JORDAN SECURITIES	110,118	10,690	10,400	10,200	
JORDAN SECURITIES	421	4,100	8,100	8,100	
JORDAN SECURITIES	9,922	3,100	3,080	3,060	
JORDAN SECURITIES	18,943	5,780	5,780	5,780	
JORDAN SECURITIES	9,800	10,000	9,800	9,800	
JORDAN SECURITIES	32,599	5,800	5,800	5,750	
JORDAN SECURITIES	2,403	6,954	6,920	6,900	
JORDAN SECURITIES	26,817	3,330	3,300	3,270	
JORDAN SECURITIES	21,959	2,710	2,710	2,710	
JORDAN SECURITIES	2,503	0,780	0,770	0,710	
JORDAN SECURITIES	2,518	12,450	11,100	11,050	
JORDAN SECURITIES	25,135	3,490	3,370	3,320	
JORDAN SECURITIES	101,923	19,550	15,500	15,200	
JORDAN SECURITIES	52,597	1,070	1,040	1,070	
JORDAN SECURITIES	7,280	2,000	2,950	1,900	
JORDAN SECURITIES	32,599	5,800	5,800	5,750	
JORDAN SECURITIES	13,128	1,090	1,090	1,060	
JORDAN SECURITIES	12,038	0,560	0,560	0,560	
JORDAN SECURITIES	2,850	5,770	5,780	5,780	
JORDAN SECURITIES	4,780	960	2,950	2,900	
JORDAN SECURITIES	10,418	14,500	13,710	13,600	
JORDAN SECURITIES	1,025	4,200	4,100	4,100	
JORDAN SECURITIES	16,021	0,620	0,620	0,590	
JORDAN SECURITIES	2,211	4,050	4,020	4,020	
JORDAN SECURITIES	18,404	9,940	8,950	8,730	
JORDAN SECURITIES	26,397	4,350	4,350	4,320	
JORDAN SECURITIES	22,925	4,180	4,180	4,110	
JORDAN SECURITIES	21,750	1,970	2,070	1,960	
JORDAN SECURITIES	11,521	5,690	5,670	5,570	

BRITISH LADIES OF AMMAN
Our monthly meeting will be held at the PLAZA HOTEL on Wed. 17th February at 4.00 p.m. all members and guests welcome.

TODAY AT

PHILADELPHIA Tel.: 634144
Robert De Niro & Nick Nolte in
CAPE FEAR
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Special show for children on Th. & Fri. at 11:00 a.m.
The Bugs Bunny

Nabil Al Mashini Theatre Tel.: 675571
Nabil Al Mashini Theatre
Tuesday January 5th marks the opening of the new theatre season presenting:
Pandemonium (The Wicked Queen)
Daily at 8:30 p.m.
Tickets office open all day

Cinema CONCORD Tel.: 677420
Kevin Costner and Whitney Houston
BODYGUARD
Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:00, 8:30, 10:30
Free Car Parking

Cinema PLAZA Tel.: 699238
Basic Instinct
Starring: Michael Douglas and Sharon Stone
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

Nabil & Hisham's AHLAN THEATRE Tel.: 625155
presents
"Welcome New World Order — 93"
a political comedy review
Daily, except for Saturdays & Sundays at 8:30 p.m.
Matinee on Thursdays at 4:30 p.m.
Box office open daily

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4 dead, 120 injured in Colombia blasts

BOGOTA (AP) — Two car bombs shattered a busy downtown district Monday, killing four people and injuring more than 120 as glass rained from skyscrapers and survivors groped through thick smoke. Twenty cars were destroyed and dozens of stores were severely damaged. Windows were broken in an area about a half-mile square. The office of President Cesar Gaviria blamed the bombings on drug traffickers in a communique calling the blasts "proof of the murderous mentality of the drug trafficking leaders." The communique did not mention Medellin cartel leader Pablo Escobar by name, but Mr. Gaviria has attributed other recent car bombings to the Medellin cartel boss. Smoke cut visibility to a few yards (metres) at both bomb sites, which were about eight blocks apart. The injured stumbled around blindly, crying out for help. Others ran about screaming as they searched for loved ones and friends, Mr. Mazalan said. The photograph shows Colombian policemen carry away the body of a woman killed by the explosion of one of the car bombs (AFP photo).

Angolan civilians flee battle-torn Huambo

LISBON (R) — The Angolan government has accused the rebel movement UNITA of killing more than 1,000 civilians as they fled a fierce battle in the central city of Huambo.

Angolan state radio said Monday night that UNITA had rained more than 2,000 artillery shells on Huambo over the last two days, forcing civilians to flee from the devastated city, which once had a population of half a million.

The radio, monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), said those travelling west towards the nearby town of Caála had been attacked by UNITA fighters and more than 1,000 had been killed.

A major battle has been raging between government forces and UNITA in Huambo for the past six weeks and it has become the centre-piece of Angola's renewed civil war.

Diplomats said UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) appeared to be on the verge of outright victory in Huambo last week, but government forces regained some lost ground there at the weekend.

Few independent reports have emerged of the fighting which has killed more than 6,000 people and reduced much of Angola's second city to rubble.

Relief agencies have begged for a truce to allow food and medicine to reach the civilian population in Huambo, where dead bodies litter the streets and water and electricity supplies have broken down.

But UNITA has turned down the request, saying the government would only use a temporary ceasefire to reinforce its tenuous position in Huambo.

One man who had flown over Huambo in a helicopter was quoted as saying that even from the air the city stood of rotting flesh.

Diplomats say the government and UNITA have both rushed reinforcements to Huambo in recent days, leading to a lull in fighting around other cities in the interior.

But UNITA's radio station Vorgan reported renewed clashes in Cutto, 150 kilometres east of Huambo, Monday.

It said UNITA forces had repelled a government attempt to recapture the city's airport.

UNITA and the ruling MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) signed a peace agreement in 1991 to end 16 years of civil war in the former Portuguese colony.

But the accord crumbled after UNITA rejected its defeat by the MPLA in U.N.-supervised elections last September.

UNITA began seizing towns in the interior shortly afterwards and the two sides returned to full-scale war at the end of December when the government tried to smash UNITA's presence in the main cities.

The two sides held a round of U.N.-sponsored peace talks in Addis Ababa in late January, but UNITA called off a second round in the Ethiopian capital planned for last week.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Sri Lanka rebels hold 4,000 prisoners

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP) — Tamil Tiger rebels are holding about 4,000 people in Nazi-like prison camps in northern and eastern Sri Lanka, according to a new human rights report. Some prisoners are tortured and beaten to death by wardens who are selected on "distinctions of cruelty and blind obedience" to the rebel leadership. University of Teachers for Human Rights (Jaffna) said in its 10th report. The prisons include small underground bunkers and large jungle camps run by sadistic guards, said the 70 page study, obtained Tuesday by the Associated Press. "The whole pattern of camps and the meticulous administration of the system give the appearance of being consciously drawn from films and books about the Nazi and Stalinist prison complexes," the report says.

Queen Elizabeth accepts tabloid settlement

LONDON (AP) — Queen Elizabeth II has accepted the £200,000 (\$284,000) offer of the Sun newspaper as settlement of a lawsuit over early publication of her Christmas message. The brass tabloid made its offer and published a front page letter of apology to the queen in Monday editions. It insisted it had done nothing wrong, but rival papers crowded about the Sun's retreat from its recent insistence that it would fight the monarch through the courts. "Her Majesty is content to regard the matter as settled since the making of the payment by the newspaper must be seen as recognising the basis of the claim," Buckingham Palace said. The Sun also agreed to pay costs of the action, a palace spokesman said, but he would not reveal the amount. Half the money would go to the Save The Children Fund, and the rest would go to the Leonard Cheshire Foundation, the palace spokesman said anonymously. The charity, which runs homes for the disabled was the subject of part of the Christmas broadcast.

N. Korea rejects nuclear inspections

PARIS (R) — North Korea refused point blank Tuesday to admit international inspectors to two suspected nuclear sites and accused the United States of spreading rumours about its atomic programme to destabilise the country. "We will not tolerate anyone, whoever they are, touching a tree or a stone of our sacred earth unless they have the right to," the Communist country's envoy to France, Pak Dong Tchoun, said in an interview with Reuters. "The United States is trying to smear us as a pretext to attack us, isolate us, choke us and strangle the popular socialism we built up with our own strength," he added.

Slovak parliament elects president

BRATISLAVA, Slovakia (AP) — Parliament elected Miroslav Kovac, a 62-year-old banker, as newly independent Slovakia's first president Monday, breaking a deadlock that had threatened to destabilise the government. Mr. Kovac, the only candidate, got 106 votes in the 150 member parliament. A three-fifths majority was required. Officials said there were no votes against Mr. Kovac among 140 deputies present. There were some abstentions and several invalid ballots. Mr. Kovac will be inaugurated for a five-year term on March 3. He was the nominee of Premier Vladimir Meciar's governing Movement for a Democratic Slovakia, a party he helped found. Mr. Kovac was the last speaker of Czechoslovakia's federal parliament before the country split into separate Czech and Slovak states on Jan. 1.

British soldier killed in Belfast

BELFAST, Northern Ireland (AP) — Gunmen in a stolen car shot and killed an off-duty British soldier Monday night as he left his house in the heart of Protestant West Belfast, police said. The gunman, lying in wait outside the soldier's house, opened fire about 8:15 p.m. (2015 GMT) as he stepped out his front door to walk to his mother-in-law's home nearby, police said. The soldier, a part-time member of the Royal Irish Regiment, was married, in his late 30s and the father of two children, police said. His name was not immediately released. The 8,000-strong regiment is locally recruited. Its mostly Protestant members are prime targets for the Irish Republican Army (IRA), which is into its 23rd straight year of a violent campaign to end British rule of Northern Ireland.

Killers of Mendes break out of Brazil jail

BRASILIA (R) — The convicted killers of environmental activist Chico Mendes escaped Monday from a prison in the western Amazon, Brazilian police said. Darli Alves Da Silva and his son, Darci, broke out of the Acre State Penitentiary in Rio Branco with seven other inmates. Acre Public Safety Director Americo Carneiro Par said. He said the inmates cut through bars on a window and fled early Monday morning. "There wasn't anybody hurt or any shooting or anything like that," Mr. Carneiro said. "At this point we don't know if they are armed." The Da Silvas were convicted in December 1990 of killing Mendes, an internationally recognised environmentalist and leader of Amazon rubber tappers.

European officials discuss refugee crisis

BUDAPEST (AP) — Senior officials from 35 countries met Monday to hear pleas from Germany and Austria to stem illegal migration and a refugee wave that is threatening Western Europe. With millions seeking entry from the wrecked economies of post-Communist Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and the Third World, Western Europe faces a crisis it cannot control.

U.N. defies Bosnian Serbs with second relief convoy

SARAJEVO (R) — A second U.N. convoy set out to take emergency supplies to starving Muslims in eastern Bosnia Tuesday, challenging Serbs who refuse to let the aid trucks roll through their lines.

The 10-truck U.N. convoy left from Belgrade for the 165-kilometre journey to the Drina River crossing at Mali Zvornik, on the Serbian border with Bosnia.

Serbs waved the convoy, laden with 72 tonnes of food and medicine, through the border check point but U.N. officials were sceptical whether it would be permitted to reach its goal, the Muslim town of Gorazde.

Four convoys from the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) have tried so far this year to get to Gorazde, under siege by Serbs. All have been turned back along the way.

Another 10-truck U.N. convoy which left Sunday and is still stranded at the Mali Zvornik border crossing, with Serbs refusing to let them ferry relief supplies to the town of Cerska, where 25,000 Muslims are trapped by a Serb siege.

The UNHCR now appears determined to dispatch the convoys at regular intervals to try to put pressure on the Serbs to let relief supplies get through to some 100,000 Muslims trapped in towns and villages around eastern Bosnia.

The UNHCR has expressed increasing exasperation with the Serb militias for thwarting U.N. convoys from reaching their destinations.

Some Bosnian Serb leaders have said they want the trucks to pass unhindered but the local commanders object, saying it is tantamount to feeding their enemies.

Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic warned the UNHCR that the convoys could come under shelling from forces loyal to the Muslim-led Bosnian government if they tried to pass through eastern Bosnia.

The Serb minority rebelled in April 1992 after Muslims and Croats declared Bosnia's independence. More than 16,000 people have been killed in the ensuing civil war.

In the Bosnian capital Sarajevo shelling and shooting rocked the old town Tuesday.

Serbs and troops loyal to the Muslim-led government traded small arms and machine-gun fire in the western suburbs of Stup and Azici, where there has been heavy fighting over the past five days.

Stup and Azici are the last Bosnian-held suburbs west of the main highway linking Sarajevo with the airport. If they fall, the Serbs would have control of the road to the airport and be perched even more firmly on the doorstep of the capital.

A UNHCR official in Geneva sharply criticised the Bosnian government's decision last week to boycott distribution of aid until the besieged Muslim villages in eastern Bosnia are fed.

"Until the authorities in Sarajevo decide to stop playing politics with humanitarian aid and decide to stop depriving their own people of food for political

reasons, we won't be able to deliver," Sylvana Foa told reporters.

The U.N. relief supplies have been a vital lifeline for the city's 380,000 civilians, trapped in a 10-month Serb siege.

U.N. officials in Sarajevo said the airport storage areas were almost full, with no supplies moving into the city due to the boycott, and there would be no more room after a 22-truck convoy arrives later this week.

Meanwhile, an internal memo of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Zagreb, obtained by Reuters, has reported the agency's warehouse in Sarajevo was closed by government order.

"During our telephone conversation of this morning with the officer in charge of the UNICEF office in Sarajevo, we were informed that our warehouse had been locked this morning by government order," read the memo dated last Friday.

A UNICEF spokeswoman in Geneva confirmed Tuesday that the Sarajevo warehouse was still sealed off, but just before the closing that powdered milk and other food had been distributed in the city. This should be enough for 6,200 babies and 5,000 pregnant and nursing mothers for one month, she said.

Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, responding to an appeal from U.N. negotiator Cyrus Vance, agreed Monday to try to persuade Bosnian Serbs to clear the way for relief convoys.

In the neighbouring Republic of Croatia, rebel Serb gunners pounded Croatian positions along

the Adriatic Coast Tuesday. The United Nations opens talks in New York later in the day to try to stamp out the renewed violence in Croatia.

Croatian radio said one woman was injured in the town of Jankovica and several Serb shells slammed into the region around the port of Zadar, on general alert during the night.

Serb artillery pounded areas around the towns of Turanj, Pakostane and Biograd on the coast.

There was minor fighting inland around Gospić and Osijek, the radio said, an ominous sign that the fighting could be spreading to other U.N.-protected Serb enclaves in Croatia.

Belgrade's Yugoslav News Agency (Tanjug) said two policemen in the Serb stronghold of Krajina were wounded Monday, one seriously, after coming under fire from a Croatian patrol in western Slavonija, near the town of Okucani.

Croat forces launched an offensive on Jan. 22, storming through a U.N. buffer zone near Zadar and breaking a year-old ceasefire with the Serbs.

Leaders of Croatia's Serbs who hold almost a third of the republic, were due to begin talks with U.N. mediators Tuesday in New York.

Goran Hadzic, president of a self-proclaimed Serb republic of Krajina in Croatia, said in New York that the international community must recognise the Serbs' right to self-determination or must protect the Serb enclave from the Croatian authorities.

Cambodia opposes power-sharing with Khmer Rouge

PHNOM PENH (R) — The Phnom Penh government Tuesday said it would be dangerous to include the Khmer Rouge in a future government of national reconciliation, according to guerrilla faction of wanting to fight its way back to power in Cambodia.

"The ultimate aim of the Khmer Rouge is to get back power by all means," Phnom Penh government spokesman Khieu Kanharith told a news briefing.

"The Khmer Rouge have no possibility to get power by peaceful ways — by means of election, that's why for sure they'll try to use violence and get back to power," he said.

An informal proposal to include all four main Cambodian political factions in a government of unity would be "very risky," Mr. Kanharith said, adding that by rejecting the Cambodian peace agreement it signed in 1991, the Khmer Rouge had forfeited its political legitimacy.

The possibility of a four-way power sharing deal, a Khmer Rouge theme for at least five years, gained credence when raised last month by head of state Prince Norodom Sihanouk.

"With the Khmer Rouge, I am going to undertake patient and repeated negotiations in order to lead them in one way or another to not continue to partition effectively Cambodia and to re-integrate into the national community," Prince Sihanouk said in a statement released from Peking on Jan. 23.

"A national government of Cambodia with PDK (Khmer Rouge) participation is envisioned," said Prince Sihanouk, who has also mooted a U.S.-style presidency for him.

PDK stands for Democratic Kampuchea, the Khmer Rouge's formal name of the regime. But the Khmer Rouge refused to implement the accord and two small guerrilla factions allied with their

common enemy, the Phnom Penh government.

It has rejected participation in a national election the U.N. peacekeeping operation in Cambodia is to hold from May 23-25 and has threatened a return to civil war.

After taking power in 1975, the Khmer Rouge led by Pol Pot forcibly emptied Cambodia's main towns and cities and initiated a radical programme of Maoist-inspired ruralisation.

More than one million people died from execution, disease and starvation before the Khmer Rouge was driven from office by an invading Vietnamese army in 1979, which installed the current government.

Phnom Penh Prime Minister Hun Sen Monday left for a three-day visit to the northwestern province of Battambang, scene of several human rights violations apparently perpetrated by local government authorities against rival political parties.

Mr. Kanharith said Mr. Hun Sen would be setting first hand the reasons for the deteriorating relationship between the local government and the U.N. Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) which is overseeing preparations for elections.

He said the prime minister would try to ensure better cooperation from local authorities.

"The first thing in his intention is to ask the governor and local authorities to improve their relationship with UNTAC officials there despite some difficulties."

"Secondly, to ask our local authorities to provide better security to all the political offices — security and safety."

U.N. sources said UNTAC has sought to remove the governor from office because of his involvement in several attacks against opposition offices.

Since last November more than 50 opposition party members have been killed and 30 wounded in political attacks countrywide.

U.K. government to ignore likely defeat over EC treaty

LONDON (AP) — The government, threatened with defeat, then given to the House was not correct," said Mr. Hurd. "We have made a mistake."

The treaty, which only Britain and Denmark have not yet ratified, must be endorsed by every member of the 12 nation European Community — either by a public vote or by legislation.

Mr. Major has refused to have a referendum, saying the treaty was part of his government's election platform and should be dealt with by parliament.

The Labour Party accused Prime Minister John Major's administration of "riding roughshod over the decisions of the Commons."

Russell Johnson, European affairs spokesman for the Liberal Democrats, which backed Labour, taunted Mr. Hurd: "Is the simple point not that there is a political will, there's a legal will?"

The Labour Party has put forward an amendment to the ratification bill seeking to remove a special provision that allows Britain to opt out of the Social Chapter.

Mr. Major's slim 21-seat overall majority in the 650 member Commons appeared likely to crumble before a coalition of opposition parties and a couple of dozen right-wing conservative rebels.

The government rebels dislike the Social Chapter, but saw the issue as their best chance of wrecking the treaty.

The vote is due in mid-March. Until Monday's announcement, Mr. Major had turned the issue into a trial of strength — apparently hoping to frighten off rebels in a vote that could have threatened his government's survival.

However, Mr. Hurd told the Commons that the government's top legal officers now said that as

the Social Chapter was dealt with in a protocol to the treaty, the Labour Party amendment was irrelevant.

The government would still try to defeat the amendment just "for the sake of completeness and tidying," he added.

Mr. Hurd's announcement removed the government's latest problem over the treaty, but was likely to increase criticism that his administration is weak and vacillating.

Labour and the Liberal Democrats support the Maastrecht Treaty, but wanted the Social Chapter included. The government regards the regulations as socialist inspired and inflating labour costs.

The treaty provides for closer cooperation on foreign policy and security policy and has a timetable — now widely regarded as unrealistic — for a common European currency by the end of the century.

Takeshita named in court over alleged payoff

TOKYO (R) — A Japanese court heard fresh scandal allegations against beleaguered former Premier Noboru Takeshita Tuesday, the day before he is due in parliament to testify again under oath.

Shingeki Isaka, a top executive of the now-defunct Heiwa Sogo Bank, said he knew of a plan in 1985 to make a big cash payment to Mr. Takeshita, then the finance minister, under the cover of the sale of a gold screen.

News reports have said the affair left Mr. Takeshita, who became prime minister in 1987 but quit two years later after being linked to an influence-peddling scam, wide open to blackmail.

Prosecutors investigated the Heiwa Sogo case for years before closing their files in 1992. Legal experts said there was now no way law-enforcers could establish the whole truth.

Mr. Takeshita appears in parliament Wednesday to face another grilling by his peers, the third in as many months.

Mr. Takeshita, 68, has strongly

denied taking any payments from Heiwa Sogo Bank, which was later absorbed by Sumitomo Bank after failing to restructure its faltering business.

After Tuesday's court testimony, the former premier's office expressed annoyance at Mr. Isaka's "unsubstantiated allegation" and said Mr. Takeshita was considering taking legal action against him.

Mr. Isaka, 66, told Tokyo District Court the money earmarked for Mr. Takeshita was part of the proceeds of a fraudulent deal that netted a profit of 3.5 billion yen (\$29.1 million at 1993 rates).

Mr. Isaka was then the auditor of Heiwa Sogo Bank, which was struggling to buy back some of its own shares previously snapped up by a speculator company.

He is charged with corporate breach of trust by misappropriating Heiwa Sogo funds. He has denied the charges.

Mr. Isaka told the court Heiwa Sogo became convinced it could get the shares back by entering into a complex arrangement with an art dealer to buy a gold folding

screen worth 500 million yen (\$4.2 million) for four billion yen (\$33.3 million).

The dealer, Toshinari Manabe, proposed to pay a total of 1.5 billion yen (\$12.5 million) from his profits to the speculator in return for his Heiwa Sogo shares, Mr. Isaka said.

News reports have said another part of the profits was to go to buy Heiwa Sogo political influence.

Mr. Isaka told the court: "For Heiwa Sogo to restructure, gaining the consent of the Finance Ministry was an utmost necessary condition... and I wanted Mr. Noboru Takeshita's... understanding."

Mr. Isaka told the court he recalled seeing a memorandum from Mr. Manabe which he believed showed the intended destination of the money.

He said Mr. Manabe had written that 1.5 billion yen (\$12.5 million) was to go to the speculator in return for the shares, and 300 million yen (\$2.5 million) to Mr. Takeshita.

A spokesman for Mr. Manabe

later told reporters his employer had written no such memo nor had he paid money to Mr. Takeshita.

Mr. Isaka said in court that, at about this time, he had repeated contact with Mr. Takeshita's personal secretary to explain the Heiwa Sogo Bank's problem and its efforts to resolve it.

He said he repeatedly sought an assurance from the Takeshita aide that Heiwa Sogo was not in danger of a buy-out. Mr. Isaka said he believed the minister himself had expressed "understanding."

News reports have said ultra-rightists exploited the "gold screen" affair in 1987 in a loud-speaker harassment campaign aimed at sabotaging Mr. Takeshita's bid to become prime minister.

A court trying different breach-of-trust charges against a former executive of transport firm Tokyo Sagawa Kyubin heard in late 1992 that Mr. Takeshita and his allies had sought the help of a yakuza gang boss to force the rightists to desist.

COLUMN

Prince Charles gives woman 'royal' birthday present

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Jovita Loperena received a royal gift on her 65th birthday Monday — a visit to her Mexico City home and a kiss from Britain's Prince Charles. In return Mrs. Loperena served up a tasty plate for Prince Charles of "barbacoa," a traditional Mexican lamb dish. "It's not Welsh lamb, is it?" joked the Prince of Wales as he downed two large forks full. "I thought it would be full of chiles. I'm glad it's not." Prince Charles visited Ms. Loperena's housing project on the first official day of his visit to Mexico. The two-story, 8 apartment complex was built to replace a run down building destroyed by Mexico City's devastating 1985 earthquake. The Prince also got flowers and kisses from 5-year-old Gloria Esquivel. Ms. Loperena's grand-daughter, Prince Charles wished Ms. Loperena "feliz cumpleaños," or happy birthday in Spanish.

Bush lives it up on sea cruise

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — To the folks aboard the Regal Princess, he's the guy out jogging on the deck at 7 a.m., the fellow in the bar before dinner, the man who hugged the couple, envious of the love boat scene on Valentine's Day. The love boat seems to have drawn George Bush out of his post-inaugural shell, and many of the 1,500 passengers sharing his Caribbean cruise are enjoying rubbing shoulders with the ex-president. "He's a nice guy. We met him in the bar one night," Paul Needham, a telephone technician from Jackson, N.J., said Monday night as a cruise ship was docked at pier 4 in old San Juan. Mr. Needham, 26, and his wife, Ellen, used their bar time to snap a picture of the former world leader, who has been press shy since he turned over the White House to Bill Clinton on Jan. 20.

'Terminator 2' shown in Sarajevo

SARAJEVO (AP) — After 10 months of siege, the first movie shown in Sarajevo was bound to open to a packed house, even if people had to brave sniper fire to get to the theatre. But the reviews were mixed: The movie was Terminator 2. More than 100 people scrambled through a hole in a wall, across a playground and into the stage door of the old Obala theatre to watch the violent, sci-fi thriller about a boy being stalked by a robot assassin. On the way out, many people said the experience was hardly escapist. "We don't need that kind of film, because as soon as I walk out of this place, I will see it live," said a filmmaker who identified himself only as Mustafa. But Danijel Gradac, a 26-year-old lawyer, was just happy to be able to go to the movies. "It kind of proves that the city is not dead," he said.

Tokyo forms multilingual police squad

TOKYO (R) — Tokyo is to set up a multilingual police squad to cope with the growing number of international events taking place in Japan, a police spokesman said. The planned squad in July of the Group of Seven leading industrialised nations (G7) helped prompt the decision, he said. The 100-strong squad will comprise speakers of English, German, Chinese, Russian, Korean and Urdu. "This move is aimed not only at the Tokyo summit, but to help us cope with the rising number of foreigners visiting Japan, especially for conferences and the like," the spokesman said. The G7 leaders and their entourages are due in Tokyo for their annual summit from July 7 to 9. The G7 comprises Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States.

N. Korea changes many telephone numbers

TOKYO (AP) — Isolated North Korea has changed many phone numbers since last October, causing confusion for foreign telephone callers, a Japanese phone company said Tuesday. A South Korean news report said the move might be aimed at discouraging telephone contact to stop sensitive information from leaking. Hardline Communist North Korea already strictly controls all contacts with the outside world. Kokusai Den shin Denwa Co., (KDD) Japan's leading international telecommunications carrier, said North Korea notified it of the changes by telex.

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